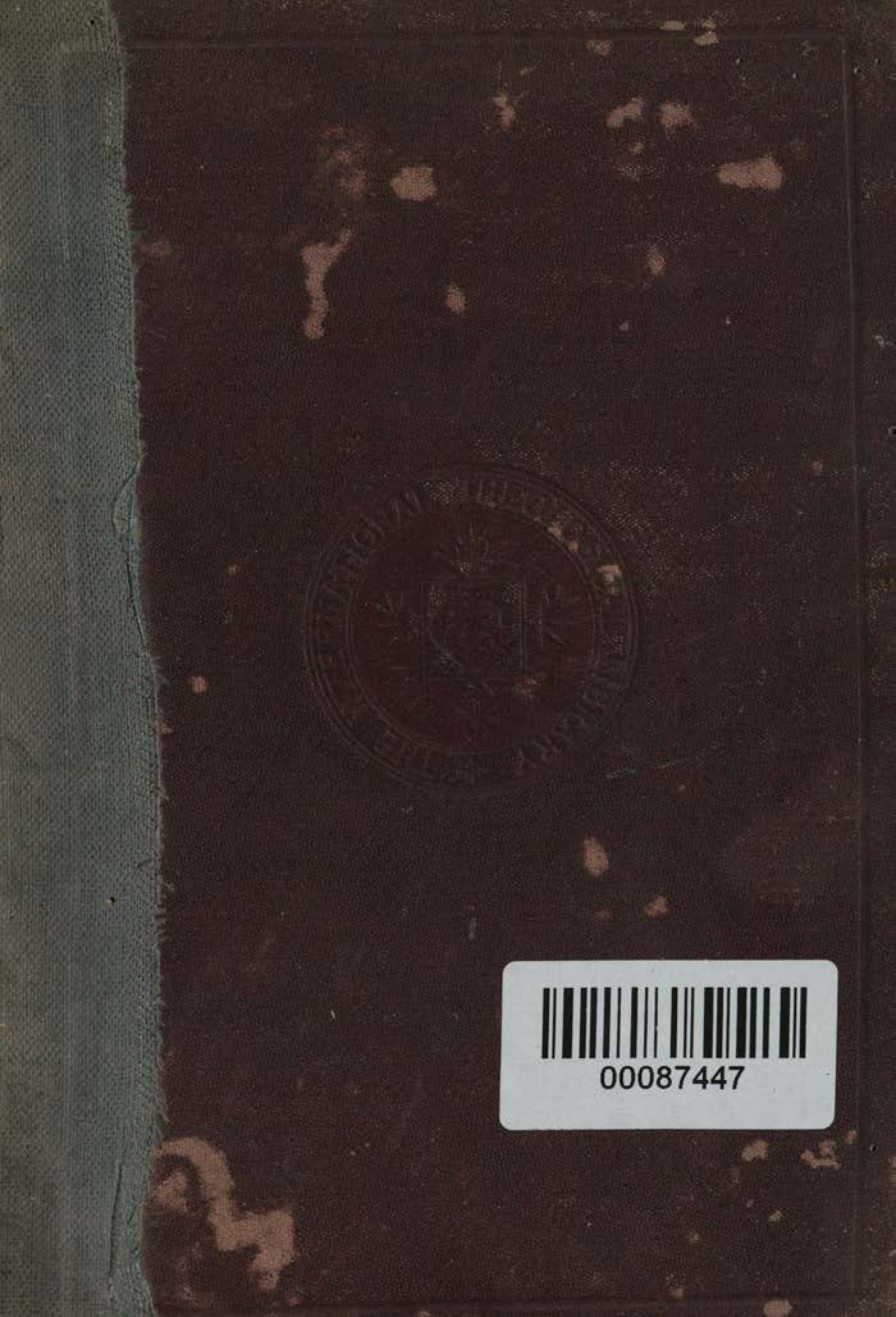
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PREFACE

THIS book is divided into two Parts. In the First Part I have traced the history of the main body of the Church throughout the Eastern provinces of Christendom, until by losing one limb after another this is seen to become more and more limited in area, although still claiming to be the one orthodox Church. In the Second Part I have taken up the stories of the separate Churches. In order to do this intelligibly I have found it necessary to go back in each case as far as possible to the particular Church's origin. Since that was usually some controversy of the older Church which was discussed in the first part of the volume, the consequence has been a certain amount of repetition. But I have deemed it better to say the same thing twice over—first in the general history and then in the local—than to leave either of them seriously incomplete. Besides, the story is not just the same when viewed from the standpoint of the local branch that it was when it first appeared in the course of the main history.

If there is any special characteristic of this book to which I would desire to lay claim, it is an honest endeavour to do justice to all parties. Now that the heat of controversy has subsided and the dust of battle settled, it should be possible to take a calm and clear view of the facts, with a full recognition of all that was excellent in various bodies of Christians who in their own day mutually anathematised one another.

I have set at the head of each of the chapters two lists of books. Those marked (*a*) are principal original

authorities; those indicated by (*b*) are more or less modern works, often selected out of a large number, as in my own judgment the books most likely to be of service to the student.

I desire to express my thanks to Professor Gwatkin for very kindly reading the proofs of the chapters on the Arian period, and for his learned and acute suggestions in conversation with reference to this and other parts of the history; to the Rev. R. Eubank for the loan of a number of works from his excellent collection of books on the Eastern Church; to the Greek, Coptic, and Armenian priests and Protestant pastors and missionaries with whom I have had conversations concerning the present condition of the Eastern Churches; to the Librarians and Authorities of the British Museum, the John Ryland's Library, the Dr. William's Library, and my own College Library for their unfailing kindness and courtesy in putting at my disposal the many books—often from out-of-the-way regions of literature—that it has been necessary to consult in an attempt to cover a vast field of history, much of which is little known and but rarely traversed.

Lastly, I record my indebtedness to the careful proof-reading and valuable literary criticism of my wife while this book was passing through the press.

WALTER F. ADENEY.

LANCASHIRE COLLEGE,
September 1908.

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THE
GREEK AND EASTERN CHURCHES

INTRODUCTION

AN adequate and independent history of the Greek and Eastern Churches would begin with the origin of Christianity, and trace from its commencement the development of the faith, which arose in the East and flourished for a considerable time most conspicuously in Syria, Asia Minor, Greece, and Egypt. But since two previous volumes of this Series[1] have been devoted to the earlier periods of General Church History, the present writer is relieved from the necessity of treating the first three centuries with any fulness of detail. Here the only requisite will be to take a rapid survey of the story viewed from the standpoint of the East, remembering that for our present purpose the centre of gravity is at Antioch, Ephesus, or Alexandria, rather than at Rome or Carthage. When, however, we come to the fourth century the scale of proportion must be reversed, and subjects which the exigencies of space only permitted to be discussed with comparative brevity in the volume on *The Ancient Catholic Church* will now demand a somewhat more extensive exposition. The age of the great Fathers, with its essentially Oriental controversies on the doctrines of the Trinity and the Person of Christ, is by far the most important epoch in the whole history

[1] McGiffert, *History of Christianity in the Apostolic Age*; Rainy, *The Ancient Catholic Church*.

of Eastern Christendom. This age was the crown and flower of the earlier period, and it produced the seeds of nearly all that was of vital interest in succeeding ages. With the exception of Hosius of Cordova, whose activity was chiefly witnessed in the East, and Hilary of Poitiers, the solitary theologian of first rank who discussed the Trinitarian problem in the West during the fourth century, all the great writers and teachers of that wonderful age of theological dialectics were in the Greek Church. Ambrose at the end of this century, and Augustine and Jerome in the early part of the following century, restored the balance to the West; but by their time ominous signs of the coming severance between Eastern and Western Christendom were already appearing, and each branch was now becoming more and more distinct and separate in its life and history.

When we look back at the early period of Catholic unity we cannot but recognise the preponderance of its Oriental characteristics. Externally regarded, in its origin and primitive development, Christianity must be reckoned an Eastern religion. In fulfilling its amazing destiny it quickly turned to the West for its richest missionary harvests, for there it found its most fertile soil, and its efforts at extension in the Farther East were long comparatively infructuous.

To-day it is specifically the religion of the West, and as such at length it is being introduced by slow and painful efforts to the ancient civilisations of India and China. We know it in a Latin or a Teutonic garb, so that its original Eastern form is disguised by its Western habiliments. Protestant Christendom sees it in the last of four stages through which it has passed, the first being Aramaic, the second Greek, the third Latin, and the fourth Teutonic. These four stages may be especially represented by the primitive apostles, the councils and creeds, the mediæval papal Church, and Martin Luther and Protestantism. Now the Greek and Eastern Churches belong to the two earliest of these stages, or rather, to be more exact,

especially to the second; for even the later Syrian Church was fundamentally dependent on the Greek. But we begin with a thoroughly Oriental situation. Christianity sprang up out of the soil of an ancient Semitic religion. The Judaism of the rabbis only represented the faded glory of the superb faith proclaimed by the ancient prophets, and the gospel realised one of those prophets' predictions by appearing as "a root out of a dry ground." Still, it needed its soil, impoverished by neglect and ill-usage as this was. We cannot regard the fact that Jesus was a Jew as due to a freak of nature or a caprice of Providence. Then, all the apostles were Jews; so apparently were all the writers of the New Testament except one, and probably he was a proselyte. The gospel of the kingdom of heaven was first preached in Aramaic, in the local Syrian dialect spoken at the time by our Lord and His disciples. The earliest record of the teachings of Jesus Christ of which we have any knowledge was written in Hebrew, or Aramaic.[1] The Scriptures used by the primitive Churches and appealed to for the authentication of their message consisted of Hebrew writings; and although the Old Testament was commonly read in a Greek translation, its Semitic ideas and imagery coloured the whole presentation of Christian truth. In the present day, not only our theology, our sermons, our prayers and hymns, but our literature and political oratory are steeped in Biblical Orientalism. When, as is often the case in his most pathetic scenes, Sir Walter Scott adopts the language of the Bible, or when one of our statesmen graces his diction by drawing from that "well of English undefiled," the Authorised Version of the English Bible, it is generally some Semitism that gives its choice flavour to the passage.

Directly we pass on to the second stage of development, the Greek, we have an immensely enlarged field of observation. The Semitic period was quite temporary and provincial, although, as the earliest, it left its

[1] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* iii. 39.

mark on all that followed. But no sooner was the gospel launched on the sea of the great world's life than it passed into a Hellenic form, being at once expounded in the Greek language and becoming gradually shaped in the mould of Greek thought. It is probable that Jesus Christ knew the popular Greek dialect of His day, although it is nearly certain that He habitually spoke in Aramaic, the language of His home and people. The apostles must have preached in Greek when they passed the narrow bounds of Palestine. Paul, Barnabas, Stephen, Philip the Evangelist, Apollos, Timothy—in fact, all the early missionaries of whom we know anything, except the Twelve, James, and Mark—were Hellenists, or even in some cases actually Greeks by race, such as Luke and Titus. All the books of the New Testament were written in Greek, in spite of the fact that two of them seem to have been intended for Jews, and one was addressed to Rome and another to a Roman colony. All the writings of the Apostolic Fathers are in the Greek language, although they originated in places so far apart as Rome, Asia Minor, and probably Egypt and Syria. Greek was the literary language of the Church in the West as well as in the East down to the end of the second century, except in North Africa where Latin was used, and in the Valley of the Euphrates where Syriac was employed. Until we reach the third century we meet with no Latin writing of importance in the Roman Church.[1] Hippolytus, whose martyrdom is dated between A.D. 233 and 239, wrote in Greek. The early bishops of Rome bear Greek names. Justin Martyr, a native of Samaria, but a travelling evangelist who carried his mission as far as Rome where he ended it by death, wrote his appeals to the emperors and the Senate, as well as his dialogue with a Jew, in Greek. In Gaul we have the Churches of Lyonne and Vienne sending an account of the persecution they had passed through under Marcus Aurelius to their brethren

[1] There is the insignificant anti-gambling tract *De Aleatoribus* in Latin, for the benefit of the uneducated.

in the East in the Greek language. Irenæus their bishop published his famous work *Against all the Heresies* in Greek. It seems probable that Christianity first made its way in Western Europe among the Jewish, Greek, and Syrian residents—colonists, merchants, and slaves. We know that at Rome it first appeared in the Ghetto among Hellenistic Jews. The Churches of Lyonne and Vienne seem to have sprung up in an offshoot from the Greek colony at Marseilles. Their famous bishop Irenæus had come to them from Asia Minor, and they took care to keep themselves in touch with the Greeks of that Eastern region.

Now the importance of these facts can scarcely be overestimated, although it has been overshadowed by another series of facts. Church historians have often called attention to the deep significance of the establishment of the Roman Empire just before the appearance of Christianity in the world. The *Pax Romana* which encircled the whole Mediterranean gave the first missionaries freedom to travel and admitted of an attentive hearing wherever they went. Everywhere they appeared as subjects of one vast empire preaching to fellow-subjects of the same empire. They were protected from uprisings of fanatical mobs by the strong, just Roman magistracy; and they could travel with ease and safety along the well-made and well-guarded Roman roads. Choosing the great towns for their chief centres of work, they found provincialism disappearing before enlarged cosmopolitan ideas, and so an atmosphere in which a gospel that overstepped the bounds of national jealousies might most readily receive sympathetic attention. Moreover, from the second century onwards, we see the growth of Roman law into a strong body of jurisprudence which is destined to combine with Christian doctrine in forming the two fundamental factors of mediæval and modern civilisation. Gradually the genius of Rome in government passed over from the empire to the Church, and popes came in for the inheritance of the power that had dropped

from the enfeebled hands of emperors. It is a truism to say that the contribution of Rome to the development —and subsequent degeneration—of the Church is a factor of immense importance.[1] Nevertheless it is an unfortunate fact that reiterated insistence on the Roman influence has distracted attention from the Grecian. Until recently it was supposed that the New Testament was composed in a peculiar provincial and theological dialect. But the discovery of contemporary papyri at Oxyrhynchus and the study of inscriptions found in Egypt, Asia Minor, and indeed scattered over a wide area of the empire, have shown that this "Hellenistic" Greek was the common language for business documents and private correspondence—bills of lading, receipts, family letters—throughout all those widely scattered regions. This is a new and convincing proof that the "common dialect" of Greek was very much more used than had been imagined hitherto. It is quite sufficient to account for the fact that the earliest Christian literature is in Greek, and it disposes of the erroneous idea that the authors were following a literary convention like the mediæval monks in their use of Latin.[2] They wrote in Greek simply because everybody wrote in Greek, whether in business or in social intercourse. The consequences of this fact are many and various. In the first place, the Christian missionaries found a *lingua franca* in which they could proclaim their message wherever they went, at all events on the main roads which they usually followed, and in the large centres of population where for the most part they carried on their work. Thus the widespread use of this one language co-operated with the common government of the one empire in providing such conditions for the dissemination of a universal faith as the world had never witnessed before. In the second place, the fact that this language was Greek had as strong intensive effects on the missionary work as its extensive influence due to the

[1] See Renan, *Hibbert Lectures* (1880).

[2] See Deissman, *Bible Studies*, passim; Moulton, *Grammar of New Test. Greek*, vol. i. ch. i.; Wellhausen, *Einleitung in die drei Ersten Evangelien*, 9.

general use of it throughout so large a part of the Roman dominion. There is no such thing as a "dead language" for people who read and speak intelligently; and certainly in early Christian times, although the splendour of the classic period had passed, the language in which Plato wrote, degenerate as it now was, came into the Church "trailing clouds of glory." For better or for worse, Greek ideas invaded the Church under the cloak of the Greek language. With the more scholarly writers this was allowed consciously.[1]

Even St. Paul shows traces of the Hellenic influence, especially in his doctrine of the flesh, which was not found in purely Jewish or earlier Christian teaching, and in the language with which he describes the exalted Christ, which reads like an echo of Philo, as well as in his evident allusions to the Hellenistic Book of Wisdom. This tendency is much more apparent in the Epistle to the Hebrews. There are traces of it in the so-called "Epistle of Barnabas." Most of the earlier Christian writers known as the Apostolic Fathers wrote simply and practically with little reference to the world outside. But the Greek influence blossomed out in the Apologists, men who made it their business to bring the gospel into contact with the thought of their age. Aristides appeared in Athens wearing the conventional philosopher's cloak; Justin Martyr came to Christianity through Platonism, and he made the first serious attempt to reconcile Philosophy to the Gospel, by combining St. John's *Logos* with the *Logos* of Philo and the Stoics. In Clement of Alexandria we have classic literary scholarship, and in his successor Origen Platonic philosophy, brought over bodily into the exposition of Christian truth. Henceforth the elaboration of doctrine in the Church becomes a process of applying Greek thought to the elucidation of the data supplied by the facts of the gospel history and the truths of Scripture and experience. Even the dialectical methods of the

[1] See Pfleiderer, *Urchristenthum*, for an extreme view of this fact, which we must admit while avoiding the danger of exaggerating it.

sophists were adopted by the Christian theologians, and the oratorical services of the rhetoricians employed by the Church's preachers. Biblical exegesis followed the lines laid down by Alexandrian grammarians in their interpretation of Homer, and the very form of the Christian sermon based on a brief "text," which has been stereotyped apparently for all time, is an imitation of the sophists' cunningly elaborated oration as the development of the hidden meaning of a single line of Homer.[1]

The Græco-Roman world on which the vessel of the gospel was launched by the apostles and their followers was a seething ocean of restless life and thought, in a period of transition after the old national and racial boundaries had been swept away and before any tide had been felt setting strongly in one definite direction. We might compare it to a choppy sea, broken by the clash of cross currents and tossed about by a whirl of winds from all quarters of the compass. In literature, in art, in philosophy, and worst of all in morals, it was a decadent age; its society was like that which was recently characterised among ourselves as *fin de siècle*. And yet, while bestial gluttony and monstrous vice ran riot among the plutocracy, no doubt there were many innocent folk who were living simple lives in remote country places. Certainly not a few in the cities were wistfully groping after the light of truth and the power of purity. But no one clear answer rang out in response to their eager questioning. Their ears were assailed by a babel of voices. The quest for truth and goodness was baffled by the many bewildering avenues that opened out before it; and seekers after the *summum bonum* were lost in a vast maze of ideas. Philosophy was eclectic, religion syncretic. Both skimmed a wide surface; neither touched bottom. So there was no settlement, no conclusion. The almost identical experience of Justin Martyr in the second century and Augustine in the fourth, their going from teacher to

[1] See Hatch, *Hibbert Lectures: The Influence of Greek Ideas and Usages upon the Christian Church*, Lecture IV.

teacher and from school to school but finding rest in none, was the inevitable fate of earnest souls in the centuries that followed the break-up of the old world, but had not yet seen the consolidation of the new world.

Nevertheless the age was essentially constructive. The theoretical scepticism of the Academy, the bold unbelief of Julius Cæsar, and the practical atheism of Nero, had given place to a revival of belief in the Unseen. This often took the form of superstition, which is the Nemesis of outraged faith. Magic was widely practised by its pretenders and widely believed in by its dupes. People regulated their lives by omens. While the venerable oracles of Delphi and other ancient shrines were comparatively neglected, augury from the flight of birds or the inspection of entrails was more widely prevalent than ever. Nor was this all. Magic is the mockery of religion, the materialistic substitute for the spiritual truth that has been discarded. The heart of mankind "abhors a vacuum." If it has not spirituality it will welcome sorcery, accepting demonology in place of theology, and giving the conjurer the seat from which the prophet has been ejected. All this was seen in the age that also witnessed the advent of the new faith destined to regenerate the world. Men were making frantic efforts to save themselves from drowning in a black ocean of spiritual corruption by catching at the floating wreckage of derelict cults. Meanwhile there were serious attempts to stimulate a real religious life. Augustus, alarmed at the mordant scepticism which that astute ruler perceived to be undermining the foundations of society and corroding the institutions of civilisation, carried on a great work of temple-building and reinstated sacrificial rites at neglected altars. This State religion, however, never touched the life of the people, who remained cold and indifferent. The Lares and Penates were still honoured in out-of-the-way old-fashioned places; but Zeus and Athene, Jupiter and Minerva, were no longer names to thrill the Greeks and Romans with awe. For the first century almost as much as for the

twentieth, among the cultivated, they were the titles of the classical divinities of the poets. Still less was the worship of the genius of Rome in the person of the emperor, first the dead emperor, then the reigning despot, anything more than a State function assiduously observed in fear of the dread accusation of *læsæ majestatis*.

But it was not from this quarter that the awakening came. That arose in the East and swept in wave after wave of religious excitement across to the demoralised, enervated West. We might almost say that Christianity itself was carried over the empire on the crest of a wave of religious revival, if we did not know that it moved on by virtue of its own superb spiritual life. Still, it is just to affirm that it appeared in an age of revivalism, and was the one successful among many rival efforts to bring back the world to a sense of the Unseen. From Asia Minor came the worship of the "great mother,"[1] with which was associated the ancient sacrifice of the *taurobolium* and its purifying bath of blood. From Egypt was brought the cult of Isis and Serapis by troops of white-robed, shaven priests, who were to be seen going in procession through the streets of the cities of Europe, introducing mysteries of a dim antiquity to the wondering West—telling of the tenderness of Isis, Queen of Heaven, who prepared the way for the Church's worship of her Queen of Heaven, the *Theotokos*, the "mother of God"—proclaiming the wonders of Serapis, the god of the unseen world of the dead, with his promise of eternal life. Above all, from Persia came the worship of Mithra, who, from being the angel Messiah of the earlier Zoroastrian religion, having absorbed the Babylonian worship of Bel, became the great Sun-god, the chief divinity of Roman emperors for generations, so that even Constantine had his image on the reverse of coins which bore on the obverse the Christian *labarum*. So potent was this cult, that Renan has said, "If the world had not become Christian it would have become Mithrastic." Its rites of baptism and of

[1] *Magna Mater*, the Roman devotee's name for Cybele.

communion of bread and wine were denounced by Christian writers as impious imitations of the Christian sacraments. While the coarser Asiatic cults ran rampant in the West, the Greeks were more attracted by the milder rites of Adonis. These Oriental religions had their societies of members, with clergy called "presbyters," so that when the apostles founded churches for their converts, superficial observers in the Greek and Roman world would see at first in the Christian brotherhoods only what was to be expected from the organisers of a new religion.

Lastly, this religious revival was accompanied by attempts at moral reformation and a marked advance in ethical teaching. At Rome Seneca, the tutor and the mentor of Nero and subsequently the mad emperor's subservient minister, taught the loftiest principles of duty that the pagan world had ever known, principles so like much that we find in the New Testament that ready currency was given to the forgeries which supported the erroneous legend of the Roman Stoic's connection with St. Paul.[1] In the East Plutarch was expounding the ancient virtues, basing them on religious faith, and adding to the stern, strenuous rigour of Stoicism a new humanitarianism that was to have a marked effect in softening the brutality of society. This would have attracted more attention in later ages if it had not been outshone by the greater glory of the enthusiasm of humanity that was glowing in the breasts of the new sect from Galilee. The next century saw the lame slave Epictetus teaching bracing lessons of moral independence, and the melancholy Emperor Marcus Aurelius sitting up at night by his camp fire on the Danube to write meditations on duty and resignation. Stoicism was winning the adhesion of the strongest, finest natures to a very high type of duty. But its glory was the secret of its failure. Only the strongest, finest natures could breathe the keen air of its lonely heights. The mass of the people never attained to it; and it had no power for recovering the failures. The world was

[1] See Lightfoot, *Theological Essays*, "St. Paul and Seneca."

not so utterly bad as the satirists Juvenal and Martial might lead us to suppose; nor must we judge it by the character of the court gossip Suetonius served up for a public eager to feast on scandals of high life, or the sardonic irony of Tacitus who wrote as the critic in opposition. Happily Rome was not the measure of the empire. Not only was there much serious effort after better things, but the monuments in the cemeteries contain touching records of simple family affections that could not flourish in a world that was utterly corrupt. And yet a deep sense of failure gave a mournful tone to the speculations of the most earnest men who were labouring for the social welfare. "No flight of imagination," says Harnack, writing of a later period, equally corrupt, "can form any idea of what would have come over the ancient world or the Roman Empire during the third century, had it not been for the Church.[1]

[1] *Expansion of Christianity*, vol. i. p. 158 (Eng. edit.).

PART I

THE CHURCH AND THE EMPIRE

DIVISION I

THE AGE OF THE FATHERS

CHAPTER I

CHRISTIANITY IN THE EAST UNDER THE PAGAN EMPERORS

(*a*) Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*; *Ante-Nicene Fathers*; Pliny, *Letters*; Tillemont, *Memoirs*, etc.

(*b*) Ulhorn, *Conflict of Christianity with Heathenism*, 1879; Mommsen, *Provinces of the Roman Empire*, Eng. Trans., 1886; Ramsay, *Christianity in the Roman Empire*, 1893; Harnack, *Expansion of Christianity*, Eng. Trans., 1904.

WHEN we begin to inquire into the extension of Christianity, we are confronted by the questions: What geographical area was brought under evangelising influences?—By what time was each region reached?—To what extent was it actually Christianised? This last question is by far the most important of the three, and it is the most difficult to answer. We can obtain a fairly safe rough idea of the area over which some knowledge of the gospel had been carried and in which some Churches had been planted during the first three centuries of the Christian era. Italy, Spain, and Gaul in the West, Britain in the North, the Roman province of Africa in the South, had all received Christianity to some extent; but though

Rome was the headquarters of Western Christendom, until long after this period the majority of its population, the Senate, and "Society," remained pagan. And beyond some parts of Italy and the African province, Christianity in Western Europe could not be regarded for most of this time as more than a ray penetrating the darkness. It is doubtful if this light had at all pierced the paganism of the German forest villages. It is to the East that we must look for the chief triumphs of early missionary activity and the most vigorous life of the primitive Churches.

Religious movements are found to go forward in waves or tides rather than with a continuous, even flow. There are times of revival alternating with flat, dull, comparatively fruitless intervals. Three such times of revival may be seen in the Christian history of the first three centuries.

The first was the Apostolic Age. In that period, "beginning at Jerusalem," the gospel was first deliberately spread in the surrounding area. Next, Samaria was systematically evangelised. But soon it was seen that the fire kindled at Pentecost was not to be confined to officially organised missions. The pilgrims who had heard St. Peter at that feast carried the astonishing news home with them and spread it among their own people, and it is not unlikely that Rome first heard of the gospel in this way. Then the scattering of the Jerusalem Church, owing to persecution by the Sanhedrin and afterwards by Herod Agrippa, sent its members abroad to carry the seed of the kingdom of heaven wherever they went, for in these early days of enthusiasm every Christian was called to be a missionary. An important step forward was taken when a Gentile Church originating in the irresponsible efforts of certain entirely unofficial Greek Christians was established at Antioch; for this Church became the centre of Hellenic Christianity, while Jerusalem remained only the headquarters of Jewish Christianity. It proved to be the most live Church of the Apostolic Age. Its charities outflowed in gifts for the Christians at Jerusalem when they were suffering from a famine; and its missionary zeal was

proved by its equipping the only definitely organised preaching expeditions to the heathen world in these early days of which we have any account. Thus in very ancient times this great Church came to the front, a position it maintained for centuries as the metropolis of Christianity in Syria. Chiefly owing to the work of St. Paul, who had been sent out by the Church at Antioch as a companion to Barnabas, at that time a more prominent person, the gospel soon reached Cyprus, the south and west of Asia Minor, Macedonia and Achaia, and even extended as far as Illyricum. After Jerusalem and Antioch—the two metropolitan centres—the chief Christian cities in the Apostolic Age were Ephesus, the capital of Asia; Thessalonica, the capital of South Macedonia; and Corinth, the capital of Achaia; to which must be added the one great outpost of the Apostolic Church in the West, Rome itself, the seat of the empire. It is possible that a Church arose in this early period at Alexandria, the metropolis of Egypt, although but little weight can be attached to the legend that this Church was founded by St. Mark, since it does not appear in any extant writing of Clement or Origen, and is first met with in Eusebius, who only records it as a tradition.[1]

Nothing is more significant of the courage and confidence of the early Christian evangelists than the fact that from the first they seized on metropolitan centres for their missions. In St. Paul these characteristics led to a magnificent prolepsis. With an enthusiasm which would have been pretentious if it had not sprung from faith and afterwards found justification in fact, the apostle spoke largely of Roman provinces—"Asia," "Macedonia," "Achaia"—as though they were already won, when he had done little more than plant his standard in their chief towns. For generations Christianity was a town religion. The intelligence, quickness, and energy of urban populations responded more readily to the new appeal of the gospel than the slower and more conservative nature of the

[1] φασίν, etc., *Hist. Eccl.* ii. 16.

country folk. Still there was a radiation from the town centres that affected the surrounding regions in various degrees. Thus in writing to the Corinthians St. Paul is able to include "all the saints which are in the whole of Achaia.[1] No reliance can be placed on unauthenticated traditions of the labours of other apostles in various parts of the world,[2] especially as the rivalry among the Churches led to an eager desire to claim apostolic origin—and consequent authority—wherever any pretence of the kind could be put forward. During the later decades of the first century the history of the Church is plunged into obscurity only partially illumined here and there by transient gleams. The Johannine writings throw some light on the district of Ephesus, and indicate that in their early days Hellenistic thought was already affecting the Churches of that part of Asia. The Epistle of Clement (A.D. 95) shows us the Church at Corinth, factious as in the days of St. Paul, rebuked by her sister Church at Rome for unchristian envy and for lack of the grace of love in dismissing her elders. If the *Didaché* may be assigned to so early a period, we have in this little Church Manual a vivid picture of the life of a small community of Gentile Christians, probably in Syria, severely antagonistic to the Jews, and kept in touch with other Churches by the visits of travelling Christians known as "apostles" and "prophets."

The destruction of Jerusalem by Titus (A.D. 70) and the consequent ruin of the Jewish State and power had a mixed effect on the condition of the Christians. On the one hand, it freed them from the persecution of their worst enemies; on the other hand, it revealed to the world the distinction between Christianity and Judaism.

[1] 2 Cor. i. 1.

[2] Matthew in Ethiopia; Andrew in Asia Minor, Thrace, Macedonia, and Greece; Philip in the same wide region, with the addition of Scythia and even Gaul; Matthias in Ethiopia; Simon the Zealot in Egypt, Lybia, and Mauritania; Thaddæus preaching the gospel in the African language; Thomas in Parthia and India. There is much confusion and contradiction among the legends.

The Christians had taken no part in the revolt; on the eve of the siege they had withdrawn to Pella. In early times they had been treated favourably by the officials of the imperial Government. St. Luke takes great pains to make this clear, and his testimony is supported by St. Paul, who always writes respectfully of the law and authority of Rome. Nero's savage massacre of Christians at Rome does not indicate any widespread persecution, although the new attitude of bitter antagonism to the imperial Government taken by the Apocalypse—so completely the reverse of that maintained by earlier New Testament books—may be traced to the shock produced by that frightful outrage among the Churches of the East.[1] Professor Ramsay considers that the attitude of Rome towards the Christians was changed by the Emperor Vespasian.[2] But if so it is very remarkable that no tradition to that effect has been preserved by the ecclesiastical writers. In point of fact, Christianity was always illegal, until it was adopted by Constantine, although it enjoyed periods of comparative immunity from persecution and was favoured by one or two direct acts of indulgence.[3] During all this time it was not a "licensed religion" as was the case with Judaism, and it was never lawful to propagate a religion without special licence. Judaism being licensed—at all events for Jews—Christianity was not molested so long as it was regarded as only a phase of the recognised religion of the Jews; but after A.D. 70, when the two faiths stood apart in the full light of day, this confusion with its consequent protection of the Church was no longer possible.

It is true that Rome showed a large-minded, practical tolerance in leaving to its conquered provinces the enjoyment of their own religions. As far as any religious faith remained with the officials, they would think it as well not to offend the indigenous divinities, and the Roman genius for government avoided needless irritation. But this did

[1] Especially if "the number of the beast" represents Nero.

[2] *The Church in the Roman Empire*, pp. 256 ff.

[3] By Gallienus, and again by Galerius.

not allow of the propagation of foreign religions in different parts of the empire.[1] No doubt such religions were spread in wild confusion; but for the most part they were content to exist side by side, without molesting one another, like the various species of birds that live together in a wood. They even went farther than this: they adopted one another's rites and legends, welded together, united in a syncretic amalgam. Such a process could be encouraged as helping towards the unification of the empire. But Christianity was of a very different temper. Enthusiastically missionary, pushing, and aggressive, it was intolerant of any other faith, since it claimed to be the one absolute faith of the one true God, and regarded all other religions as false and wicked and their divinities as demons to be denounced and cast out. For this reason the Christians were very unpopular. Some of them did not hesitate to pour scorn and contempt on the superstition of their neighbours to an extent that was not only insulting, but, as sincere pagans believed, even dangerous; and earthquakes and pestilences were attributed to the anger of the gods at the "atheism" of the Christians. Consequently, it was common for a great natural calamity to be followed by an outbreak against the Christians who were supposed to have provoked it. Thus they frequently suffered from the persecution of panics. Then their refusal to share in the public games while they declaimed against the lewdness of the theatre and the bloodthirsty cruelty of the amphitheatre, their reluctance to join in popular holidays or to accept municipal offices which involved pagan sacrificial rites, and their reiterated prediction of the coming judgment and approaching end of the world by fire, resulted in their being regarded as "enemies of the human race." We can well understand how a Government that was nervously anxious to prevent disorder in its vast and incongruous dominions would be averse to the spread of a sect whose presence provoked antagonism and introduced a disintegrating element into society.

[1] The rule to be observed was, *Cujus regio, ejus religio.*

Above all, the new, monstrous cult of the emperor, which was supposed to carry with it the worship of the incarnate genius of Rome, was peculiarly obnoxious to the Christians, whose outspoken repudiation of it laid them open to a charge of treason, to the terrible accusation of *læsæ majestatis*. For these reasons they were always liable to persecution.

The attack assumed various forms. Sometimes it was a mere rising of a fanatical mob, though, as in the Turkish dominions to-day, there might be good reason for supposing that this was winked at or even instigated by the authorities; sometimes it was a case of prosecution by a private individual, before a magistrate who may have been reluctant to put the law in force and anxious to find an excuse for acquitting his prisoner; sometimes it was directly ordered by the emperor. It was only in the latter—a much more rare—case that a serious, widespread persecution took place. There is no evidence that any such persecution, as a deliberate act of State policy, was experienced under Vespasian or Titus, or that those emperors had any idea whatever of eradicating the then obscure sect of the Christians. Domitian (A.D. 81–96) does appear to have cast his suspicious eye on these dangerous innovators, and probably his execution of persons of high position for "atheism" and for turning aside to "customs of the Jews" was an attack upon Christians. But the known instances are few. Irenæus's statement that St. John was banished to Patmos in the reign of Domitian[1] is an indication that there was then some persecution in the East; but, as we have seen, sporadic persecution was always possible, and probably it never entirely ceased during these times. There is no sign of an extensive general persecution under Domitian.

When we come to the second century, the history of the Early Church begins to emerge out of obscurity in two quarters of great interest, during the reign of Trajan (A.D. 98–117). First we have Pliny's correspondence with the

[1] *Adv. Hær.* v. 30.

emperor, from which we learn that in Bithynia the temples were almost forsaken, that there was no sale for sacrificial victims, and that the Christians were in a majority of the population. Pliny as proconsul had prosecuted inquiries into this serious condition of his province, putting two deaconesses to the torture, to extract from them the secrets of the sect; but he could ascertain nothing against them. Still, he regarded Christianity as a "depraved and immoderate superstition," and he had condemned many of its adherents to death. Being a humane man and not self-reliant, Pliny was perplexed at the problem that faced him. He shrank from the drastic measures that would be involved in the attempt to stem the popular movement;[1] yet this movement was illegal. In fact, it was now doubly obnoxious to the law, because Trajan had recently issued a rescript forbidding the existence of secret societies, and the churches appeared to be such societies. Ultimately this difficulty was got over by the enrolment of them as burial societies, since an exception was made in favour of those serviceable clubs. Trajan's brief, decisive answer to Pliny's inquiry as to how he should treat the Christians is highly significant.[2] There is to be no police hunt for these people, and informers are not to be encouraged. But when Christians are actually prosecuted they must be punished. We can have no question as to what that means; the penalty is death. Dr. Lightfoot regarded this as a merciful rescript; and no doubt it was merciful in intention. Nevertheless, now for the first time—as far as we are aware—Christianity as such is declared to be a capital crime. Previously it was this constructively; henceforth it is to be so explicitly, on the authority of the emperor.

The second case in which we have a gleam of light thrown on the state of the Church in the reign of Trajan is that of the seven Ignatian letters now widely accepted in their shorter Greek form.[3] Ignatius, the bishop of

[1] Pliny, *Epis.* x. 96. [2] Pliny, *Epis.* x. 97.

[3] Their genuineness is vindicated by Zahn and Lightfoot and admitted by Harnack, Kruger, etc.

Antioch, is taken to Rome during this reign to be killed by wild beasts in the Coliseum.

Hadrian (A.D. 117–138), the "grand monarch" who made it his pride to beautify the cities of his empire with magnificent buildings while he lived in splendour and luxury, had none of the rigour of the stern soldier Trajan, and he does not appear to have taken any part himself in the persecution of Christians. Yet there were instances of martyrdom even under his easy rule; and the insurrection of the Jews stirred up by Bar Cochbar (A.D. 131) led to great slaughter of Christians wherever their old enemies got the upper hand of the Roman Government. This demolished the last remnant of confusion between Christianity and Judaism in the official mind.

Formerly it was customary to regard the reign of the just, conscientious emperor Antoninus Pius (A.D. 138–161) as free from the stain of persecution; but that agreeable delusion had to be abandoned a few years ago, when the date of the martyrdom of Polycarp, the aged bishop of Smyrna and teacher of Ignatius, was ascertained to fall within this reign (A.D. 155 or 156). Still, it was a local affair, largely instigated by Jewish animosity, with which the emperor was not directly concerned. His successor, the gentle Marcus Aurelius, saint and philosopher (A.D. 161–180), must be held responsible for the savage persecution of the Christians at Lyons and Vienne—so graphically described in the letter from those Churches to their brethren in Asia Minor—since he had been consulted by the local authorities.[1] His own reference to the Christians shows that he regarded them as obstinate, self-advertising fanatics whose folly was a menace to public order. Marcus Aurelius went beyond Trajan both in directly instigating persecution and in reviving the odious practice of employing informers. According to Melito of Sardis, the persecution spread to Asia Minor,[2] and from Athenagoras we should conclude that it extended over a wide area.[3] This is the period of the early apologists,

[1] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* v. 1. [2] *Ibid.* iv. 13. [3] *Apol.* i. 2.

Quadratus and Aristides writing in the reign of Hadrian, Justin Martyr and Athenagoras in the days of the Antonines. The calm, courageous dignity of the defence of Christianity now offered to the Government by men who put it forth at the risk of torture and death, is as striking as its intellectual vigour and rare moral enthusiasm. It never descends to cringing excuses, cowardly subterfuges, or angry retorts, although it is always prepared to drive the war of argument into the enemy's territory. Calm, open, frank, respectful, it reveals its authors as men who are certain that they can justify their position and confident of the future triumph of their cause, while they are quite ready to shed their own blood in the athletics of martyrdom.

Nowhere is the irony of history more manifest than in the fact that when the two best of the Roman emperors, Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius, were followed by one of the most worthless in the person of Commodus (A.D. 180–192), persecution was arrested and a season of prosperity hitherto unparalleled set in for the Christians. This idle, dissolute young man had not sufficient seriousness of purpose to persecute, and he seems to have taken a stupid pleasure in reversing his father's policy. At the same time, Marcia, his favourite mistress, was distinctly friendly to the Christians, among whom she appears to have been brought up in her humbler days; in particular she exerted herself to have the exiles recalled from Sicily. Now for the first time Christians were to be seen and recognised as such in the imperial court.

At this point the second period of activity and growth in the Church begins. With the exception of one short interval of persecution a long summer of prosperity had now set in. Commodus was succeeded by Septimius Severus (A.D. 193–211), a good emperor reigning well, and therefore a persecutor of the Christians. But his antagonism to the growing Church appears to have been provoked by the extravagances of those Puritans of the second century, the Montanists. There are two sides to

this matter. The Montanists perceived that with growth in numbers, wealth, and general prosperity, the Church was losing its early purity and the fine, heroic enthusiasm of simpler times. They not only practised a new rigour of discipline within the Church; they also showed themselves eager to grasp the martyr's crown by provoking the antagonism of the authorities. Now, Septimius Severus while on progress in the East had come under the influence of the priests of Isis and Serapis, among the most bitter of the antagonists of the Christians. It is not surprising, therefore, that under these circumstances he issued a decree forbidding the propagation of new doctrines or any change of religions (A.D. 203), a rather inconsistent thing to do considering that he himself had just been initiated into the Egyptian mysteries. But the decree was simply aimed at the Christians, who were the chief, if not the sole, sufferers from it. The consequent persecution extended along North Africa and was felt severely in Egypt, where Leonidas, the father of Origen, was the first to seal his faith with his blood. Here too was the scene of the romance of Potameia, the beautiful, gifted girl who won over her military custodian Basilides to follow her in martyrdom. After this we come to forty years of peace, not indeed without occasional local outbreaks of persecution—for Christianity was illegal all this time—but with no serious attempt to suppress the growing Church, which is now seen standing out in broad daylight and challenging the world's attention. One emperor, Alexander Severus, has a statue of Christ set up in his palace by the side of statues of Abraham and Orpheus; another, Philip the Arabian, is even rumoured to have been a Christian,[1] though his celebration of the secular games contradicts that notion.

Thus all seemed favourable, and the Church, growing strong and rich, might consider that since she had weathered the storms of her early days she could now look forward to a course of unimpeded progress, till the

[1] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* vi. 34.

whole empire was won for the dominion of Christ, when there fell upon her a violent persecution, in comparison with which all previous attacks were slight and local. This was the great Decian persecution (A.D. 250). The emperor Decius, coming to the throne of what appeared to be a decaying empire, determined to make a supreme effort to restore the old Roman virtue and vigour. In particular he regarded the Christians as the most dangerous innovators of the ancient customs. Accordingly he entered on the huge task of putting an end to Christianity. The persecution which followed was a life-and-death struggle. It mainly differed from previous persecutions in being carried on by a strong, determined man in pursuance of a deliberate policy to root out what its author believed to be the most serious menace to the State, an *imperium in imperio*, the growth of which threatened to choke the civil power. Thus instigated by Decius himself, this tremendous onslaught on the Church—incomparably more searching and uncompromising than anything that preceded it—was the first really general persecution, the first attempt of Rome to use all its might for the utter extirpation of Christianity. And it failed. The Church proved too strong for the State. When Decius perished miserably in a morass during a war with the Goths, the persecution flickered out and faded away. Gallus revived it faintly and Valerian more seriously, until his capture by the Persians was promptly followed by his son Gallienus's issue of the first edict of toleration (A.D. 260). There had been hosts of martyrs; but multitudes of weaker men and women had been terrified into apostasy, and the Church was now face to face with the grave problem of "the lapsed," a problem that led to a serious division. Still, the fiery ordeal had been a great purgation, and now again the Christians enjoyed a long spell of liberty, with ample opportunities for pushing their conquests forward in this third season of vigorous life and missionary energy.

It would seem that this time the victory was secure.

But once again the forces of the enemy were marshalled for a last decisive conflict. After more than forty years of peace and prosperity the most severe of all the persecutions was commenced. Christianity was now a popularly recognised religion; in the cities large and imposing churches were among the chief public buildings; many Christians were to be found in high places at court; and the emperor Diocletian was favourably disposed to them. Although the persecution bears his name, and although as senior Augustus he was actually responsible for it and was even induced to sign the earlier edicts, its real author was his colleague Galerius, whom Lactantius calls the "Wild Beast"; and the final edict commanding all Christians to sacrifice or die was issued by another colleague, Maximian, when the old emperor was laid aside in broken health and in a state of melancholy bordering on insanity. Eusebius gives us a vivid account of the martyrs of Palestine under this last desperate attempt to stamp out Christianity.[1] But if the Decian persecution with all the resources of the State to support it had failed half a century before, the idea of destroying Christianity now that it had grown so much stronger was preposterous. All this bloodshed was so much waste as far as the aims of the persecutors were concerned. In the agonies of his deathbed, its author Galerius issued an edict putting a stop to it and even commanding the Christians to pray for him (A.D. 311). After this it is not so very wonderful that two years later Constantine went over to the winning side and openly adopted Christianity; for he was an astute ruler who had seen the outbreak of the persecution from Diocletian's court and observed its utter futility.

It is not easy to estimate the position attained by the victorious Church in the East after these centuries of chequered history, but a rough idea may be formed from the data afforded us by history. Professor Harnack points to Asia Minor as "the Christian country κατ' ἐξοχήν

[1] *De Martyribus Palæstinæ*—following book viii. of *Hist. Eccl.*

during the pre-Constantine era."[1] Half Nicomedia was now Christian; Bithynia and Western Pisidia were widely Christianised; in Asia and Caria the Christians were very numerous; the southern provinces of Syria, Pamphilia, and Isauria sent twenty-five bishops to the Nicene Council and Cilicia sent nine. Thrace, Macedonia, Dardania, Epirus, and Greece were all provinces of the Church with their own metropolitans, though little is known of their history. North and west there were young churches planted as far away as the banks of the Danube, and missionary work was already begun among the Goths to the north-west of the Black Sea.

In Palestine there was quite a number of churches—Professor Harnack gives the names of about thirty—with Jerusalem as their capital. There were three churches in Phœnicia and a good number in Cœle-Syria, with the important bishopric of Antioch at their head. Less than a century after this time Chrysostom reckons the number of members of the chief church—perhaps, as Gibbon considered, meaning the total Christian population of this city—to be 100,000. Then there were churches in Arabia, and as early as the time of Origen numerous bishoprics in towns south of the Hauran. In Egypt the Christians were very numerous, those in Alexandria far outnumbering the Jews; churches were flourishing in the Nile towns as far up as Philæ and on the two oases. Lastly, Edessa was now an important Christian centre, and there were several churches in Mesopotamia, and some even beyond the confines of the empire in Parthia and Persia.

[1] *Expansion of Christianity*, Eng. Trans., vol. ii. p. 326.

CHAPTER II

CONSTANTINE THE GREAT

BORN PROBABLY A.D. 274; DIED A.D. 337

(*a*) *Pagan historians:* Eutropius; Aurelius Victor; Zosimus. *Christian writers:* Lactantius; Eusebius; Socrates; Sozomen.
(*b*) De Broglie, *l'Église et l'Empire au IVe Siècle*, vol. i., 1856; Stanley, *Eastern Church*, 1861; Smith's *Dictionary of Biography*, article "Constantinus I."; Frith, *Constantine the Great*, 1905.

THE name of Constantine marks the commencement of a new era of history both in the empire and in the Church. The transition from the old form of government which was nominally republican, with the emperor as prince of the Senate, commander-in-chief of the army, Pontifex Maximus, and much else, accumulating in his own person the chief republican offices, to the new form of government which was frankly despotic, must be attributed to Diocletian. It was that keen-sighted ruler who saw that the time had come for the abolition of empty formulæ and a readjustment of the whole machinery of government. Diocletian abandoned all pretence of maintaining the stern Roman simplicity of manners, and introduced into his palace the pomp and ceremony of an Oriental court. By centralising the government, and then subdividing it, so that there were two Augusti—an Eastern and a Western—and two Cæsars under them, he so knit up the imperial authority that when the senior Augustus died the junior Augustus took the first place as a matter of course, and one of the Cæsars became junior Augustus. Each Augustus nominated his own Cæsar. All decrees affecting the whole empire were signed by the joint rulers, the supreme authority resting

with the senior Augustus. In this way three advantages were gained: the vast work of government was subdivided; the unity of empire was preserved; and the succession was regulated, in a peaceful and orderly method. Then, by settling his court at Nicomedia, Diocletian already began to transfer the centre of gravity in the empire from Rome to the East. Constantine came to the throne under this arrangement. His father was Constantius Chlorus, of a noble Dardanian family, who had been Cæsar over the provinces of Gaul, Spain, and Britain, and then Augustus. His mother was the famous Empress Helena, whose traditional "Invention of the Cross" has made her a conspicuous figure in Christian art. By a confusion of traditions she has been taken for a British princess of the same name; but she was really a Cilician and servant at an inn. Helena has been described as a "concubine" of Constantius; but she must not be regarded as only the emperor's mistress. There can be no doubt that they were husband and wife according to a secondary order of marriage recognised in the empire at the time.

The young Constantine was brought up at his mother's village home till he was sixteen years old, when the suspicious Diocletian had him come to reside at court in Nicomedia, evidently as a hostage for his father's good conduct. When Constantius became Augustus he sent for his son to help him with the government (A.D. 305). Though outwardly consenting, Galerius, who was senior Augustus at the time, was really unwilling to let him go, and Constantine had to slip away secretly and hurry Westwards to escape recapture. The next year (A.D. 306) Constantius died at York, having nominated his son as his successor; and at York Constantine was hailed by the soldiers as Augustus. When he had obtained supreme power, Constantine, like Diocletian, made the centre of his government in the East. For a time Nicomedia, not Rome, was the real capital of the empire. Then Constantine determined to found a new Rome. With the insight of genius he chose Byzantium as the site, and built there the

city which as Constantinople has ever after commemorated its famous founder. Magnificently situated on the Bosphorus by the high road between Europe and Asia, this city was naturally the key to the gates of empire in both directions. It was in Europe, not in Asia, as was the case with Nicomedia. We may regard that fact as not without significance. Diocletian, though so alive to the exigencies of the times, looked Eastward and emulated the Oriental despots in his court methods. But although his mother was an Asiatic and although he himself had spent his youth in Asia, Constantine was in sympathy with Greek culture, and Constantinople was a Greek city. From the first and throughout its history till its capture by the Turks, the new city was a centre of Hellenic life and influence. The significance of this fact can hardly be overestimated. The Roman empire in the East was fast degenerating into an Asiatic despotism after the Persian type. Constantine saved it from that fate. Nevertheless he accentuated the most significant line of policy pursued by Diocletian; while preserving the European character of the government, he recognised that the centre of gravity must be in the East and acted accordingly. The consequences were as momentous to the Church as to the empire. Removal from Rome was escape from Roman pagan traditions and Roman aristocratic influences. It was the death-blow to the last lingering influence of the Senate. Henceforth the empire, except in one vital element, was Roman only in name. It was no longer the rule of a city over its conquered provinces; it was the rule of a prince and his colleagues, who might be of any nationality. The one vital element which preserved the integrity of the empire throughout and perpetuated it in the Byzantine rulers was Roman law. Like "the kingdom of God," this vast civilizing influence came "without observation." Having its foundations in old civic usages of republican times, and built up by jurists quite unknown to fame from the time of Marcus Aurelius onwards, it was destined to become the basis of the jurisprudence and public ethics of

mediæval and modern Europe. Roman law stands only second to Christianity as a moulding influence of European civilisation. This system was so firmly established by the time of the transference of the chief seat of government to the East, that the world was saved from what might have been total ruin, from the submerging of the stern Roman sense of justice and the swamping of personal as well as public right beneath a flood of Oriental customs.

The founding of Constantinople profoundly affected both the Western and the Eastern branches of the Catholic Church, but in very different ways. To the West it brought ecclesiastical liberty, and it made the papacy possible. Now, while the papacy became a tyranny within the Church, it secured a measure of freedom from the tyranny of the imperial Government over the Church. At Rome the pope soon assumed a position which would have been impossible to him if the emperor had been residing there. While other cities—Trêves, Milan, Ravenna—subsequently became centres for the empire in the West, Rome was left severely alone, with the consequence that the pope was the first citizen and even came to take the place of the emperor as the chief centre of power and influence in the city. It would be grossly unfair to attribute the enormous power that has accreted to the papacy to nothing but the rapacity of popes. At more than one crisis of European peril the pope proved to be the saviour of society. When the arm of the empire was paralysed, the power of the Church came to the rescue of civilisation, in face of barbarian invasions. Leo I. was able to protect Italy as effectually as though he had been a powerful prince, although his only weapons were persuasion and diplomacy. Gregory the Great was a potent influence for the saving of civilisation in the Old World, as well as for the missionary work of the Church among the new rising races of the West. Hildebrand may be regarded in the light of a champion of the spiritual power in opposition to the brute force of mediæval tyranny. The Middle Ages saw the long duel between the popes and

the emperors, and on the whole the popes were on the side of religion, culture, and progress. It was otherwise when the Renaissance and the Reformation were followed by the counter-Reformation. Then all the forces of obscurantism and despotism ranged themselves with the papacy, while the new light, life, and liberty were driven out to fresh fields.

How different was it in the East, where the Church was subservient to the State throughout all these ages! No doubt we must attribute the contrast between the histories of Eastern and Western Europe in part to racial distinctions. In some respects the former is more allied to Asia than to Europe. Thus we are able to trace the history of all the Eastern Churches in a common conspectus. But while this is the case it must be seen that Constantine's political move in finally and effectually transferring the centre of government from the banks of the Tiber to the shores of the Bosphorus immensely aggravated the tendency of the civil despotism to crush out the liberties of the Church. The Eastern Church, from the days of Constantine onwards, lived under the shadow of an imperial palace. That we may take to be an epitome of its history; and the ominous fact is directly traceable to the founding of New Rome by Constantine.

But while this is obvious to us to-day, and is the most significant phenomenon in the appearance of Constantine on the stage of history when viewed in the broad light of the ages, it was another department of the famous emperor's action that arrested the attention of contemporaries. The man who really inaugurated the Eastern Church's paralysing bondage to the State was hailed by the Christians of his day as their emancipator, friend, and patron, and panegyrists loaded his name with fulsome praises for his services to Christianity.

The story of the conversion of Constantine belongs to the romance of history; but, like many another romantic tale which has been made to pass through the fires of criticism, it has not come out scathless. The adulation of

a panegyrist, the natural thirst for marvels, and the convention of mediæval art have combined to set the scene of Constantine's vision on the road to Rome side by side with St. Paul's vision during his journey to Damascus. When viewed in the sober light of history, neither this event, whatever it may have been, nor its consequences, is in any way comparable to that stupendous crisis and turning-point in the career of the great apostle. Newman argued strenuously for the belief that here was a real miracle, a direct supernatural intervention by God, at a fitting time. But when we consider the fact that it was a war banner that the Prince of Peace was said to have inspired, and when we go on to look at the subsequent character of the man who is said to have been thus favoured and the whole effect of the patronage of Christianity by the empire, it is not easy to believe that all this indicates nothing less than the finger of God. When, however, we come down to the lower plane of simple history, it must be admitted that something strange did happen, and that this occurrence, whatever it was, became the occasion of stupendous consequences. The accounts vary; but that is no more than must be said of all independent reports of the same event. What is plain is that, in October 312, while Constantine was marching to Rome against the usurper Maxentius, the champion of paganism, something occurred to lead him to claim the Christian symbol for his standard in the approaching battle. Whether we accept the narrative which Eusebius says the emperor gave him on oath[1]—perhaps not to us the more reliable for that fact—that the emperor "saw with his own eyes the trophy of a cross of light in the heavens, above the sun, and bearing the inscription, "Conquer by this,"[2] and received an explanation from Christ in a dream; or stretch our credulity to the

[1] *Vit. Const.* i. 27. On this point Prof. E. C. Richardson acutely remarks: "Note here the care Eusebius takes to throw off the responsibility for the marvellous" (*Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. i. p. 490). In his History Eusebius' statement is both vague and cautious (*Hist. Eccl.* ix. 9).

[2] τούτῳ νίκα.

still more marvellous and much later account of Sozomen, according to which angels appeared at the time of the vision and gave the explanation there and then; or fall back on the sober statement of Lactantius, whose report is the earliest of all, and who resolves the whole occurrence into a dream [1]— whichever of these narratives we accept, or whether we attempt to combine any of the elements contained in them, we cannot well escape from the conclusion that something happened to bring Constantine to a definite decision at this great crisis of his life. Possibly there was some curious effect of sunlight — such as that known to astronomers as the "parhelion," in which a cross of light may be seen radiating from the sun, which the emperor's mood at the time could not but lead him to welcome as a sign from heaven. That is the point. The fascination for a supposed physical miracle has diverted attention from a most interesting psychological process. Unlike St. Paul, Constantine had never been opposed to Christianity. He had inherited from his father a friendly feeling towards the Christians. Eusebius prefaces his report of what the emperor had said to him about the vision with a description of Constantine's perplexity and his prayer for light at a moment of terrible anxiety. None of the narratives will allow us to assign his adoption of Christianity to mere statecraft or cunning policy.

When the battle at the Milvian Bridge in which the tyrant Maxentius was killed gave Constantine a magnificent victory, he felt in this a confirmation of his resolve to accept the Christian faith and adopt its sign. It is plain that he threw in his lot with the Church on conviction. How deep that conviction went it is not easy to say. His subsequent syncretism and his vague treatment of the essentials of Christian truth forbid us to believe that he had any definite intellectual grip of the subject. Still, he honestly accepted Christ as a Divine Lord, and he consistently leaned to the side of the Christians in their differences with the pagans. It scarcely lies within

[1] *De Morte Pers.* 44.

the province of history to penetrate still deeper into the inquiry as to whether the so-called conversion of Constantine brought with it a real change of character. He was large-minded, generous, pacific before this; and he remained so afterwards. Yet he cannot be acquitted of charges of savage outbursts of cruelty even after his "conversion." Possibly he was not guilty of the murder of his wife Fausta, but he could not plead innocence with regard to that of his son Crispus. Reasons of State have been urged in defence of his action in this matter; evidently it was a political murder. Still, the guilt of blood and that the blood of his own child lies on Constantine in the Christian period of his life. In other respects he was an honourable and upright man, and a faithful husband, free from all accusations of impurity among the great temptations of an Oriental court.

Most men act from mixed motives, and certainly we could not credit Constantine with the single eye of a George Washington or a John Bright. There were high reasons of State to encourage so astute a master of the art of government to follow up his undoubted sympathy with Christianity and more or less solid convictions of its truth with vigorous practical patronage. He was far-seeing enough to perceive that it was the winning side in the conflict of princes and parties. He had been a hostage at Nicomedia when the Diocletian persecution had broken out; he had witnessed the mad fanaticism of Galerius which had failed to subdue the calm courage of the Christians; Maxentius the usurper, and later Licinius, his partner, but also his rival, had enlisted their forces in favour of paganism. Manifestly it was to the interest of Constantine to have the powerful, growing influence of Christianity thrown into the scale in his favour. It is highly to the credit of his discernment that he perceived how futile the long intermittent conflict of the empire with the Church had been, and saw that the time had come, not merely to make peace, as even Galerius and still earlier Gallienus had seen, but to accept the situation frankly and

turn it to the best account. We may admit the genuineness of Constantine's conviction of the truth of Christianity and the honesty of his decision to adhere to it, and still go a long way with Seeley when he asserts, concerning Constantine's adoption of Christianity, that "by so doing he may be said to have purchased an indefeasible title by a charter. He gave certain liberties and he received in turn passive obedience. He gained a sanction for the Oriental theory of government; in return he accepted the law of the Church. He became irresponsible to his subjects on condition of becoming responsible to Christ."

It is necessary to consider this position and come to some clear understanding of it, because we are here at the source and fountain of the political history of the Greek Church. What that Church became, not only in relation to the State, but also in its own life and character, was largely determined by the action of Constantine in patronising Christianity and the conduct of the Church in accepting his patronage. At this point we may say the die was cast, the Rubicon was crossed, the fate of Christendom—or rather of Eastern Christendom, for the West soon shook itself free—was sealed. It is desirable, therefore, to trace out carefully the stages of Constantine's treatment of the Church till we reach the final issue which was to stamp the ecclesiastical policy of the empire for all succeeding ages. These may be regarded as four, characterised respectively by sympathy, justice, patronage, and control.

In the first stage Constantine feels drawn to Christianity and adopts the Christian symbol; in the second he grants religious liberty for the benefit of the Christians; in the third he bestows on the Church privileges, immunities, and funds from the State purse; in the fourth he interferes with ecclesiastical affairs, tyrannises over bishops and congregations and forces them to his will.

Constantine's first public confession of Christianity consisted in his adoption of the Labarum as his standard in battle. This symbol consisted of a spear with a cross-

piece near the point, a gold wreath containing the initials of Jesus Christ (I and X) as an anagram (☧) mounted above and a banner hanging below the cross-piece. After his victory over Maxentius at the Milvian Bridge, Constantine was welcomed by the citizens of Rome as their deliverer from an odious tyranny, and by none more warmly than the Christians. The emperor justified their enthusiastic support by having a statue of himself with a cross in his hand erected in the most frequented part of the city. An inscription ascribed his victory to "this salutary sign." Constantine now showed favour to the Christians at every opportunity, and no persecution of Christianity was possible under his government.

It would appear from a phrase in the edict of Milan that at an early date Constantine had issued rescripts to his officials favourable to the Christians. But the legal pronouncement which granted them complete religious liberty followed a meeting of Constantine with Licinius at Milan on the 13th of June A.D. 314. This *Magna Charta* of religious liberty is one of the most significant documents in all history. It grants absolute freedom in religion, though it mentions Christians as especially needing the boon, declaring that "the Christians and all others should have liberty to follow that mode of religion which to each of them appeared best." It applies to the whole empire—to all races, all creeds, all cults. There is no restriction of the heathen in favour of the Christians. Further, it permits people to change their religion, allowing them to adopt Christianity or any other religion. Lastly, it orders the confiscated property of the Christians to be restored, "and that without hesitation or controversy"; there are to be no lawyers' quibbles with this delicate question of property. Compensation to the present holders of Church buildings may be paid out of the imperial treasury.[1]

Here is the ideal of religious liberty, though not Cavour's "Free Church in a Free State"; for until the

[1] Lactantius, *De Morte Pers.* 48, for the Latin form of the edict; Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* x. 5, for a Greek version of it.

State is free it is difficult for the Church to escape from the interference of the Government even when the despotic ruler starts with the honest intention of respecting its liberties. Nevertheless the conception of the edict of Milan is magnificent in the breadth of its liberalism. As we read it we feel that the author of such a document must be classed with those rare minds that are centuries in advance of their age, and have the genius to adumbrate brilliant ideas the real scope of which is quite beyond their actual principles. Except for a very brief interval, the large conception of the edict of Milan was not realised even in the West before the Reformation, and indeed not then except by a few obscure separatists such as the Baptists, the early Independents and Pilgrim Fathers, and a century later the Quakers. We must come down to the Dutchman William III. for a sovereign who really practised what Constantine so boldly sketched out in the famous edict nearly fourteen hundred years before. Meanwhile this idea has never been realised in the Eastern Churches.

In point of fact this law of religious liberty was an imperial permit, emanating from the good pleasure of Constantine. It was only the law of the empire because it was the will of the emperor. Thus from the first it rested on a very precarious basis. The world was not only not ripe for complete religious liberty; no party in State or Church was really prepared to concede it to an opponent. We can scarcely look in the fourth century for what the greater part of Christendom is not yet within measurable distance of obtaining or even desiring. Accordingly we must not be at all surprised to see that from licensing all religions—and so liberating Christianity from penal restrictions—Constantine quickly proceeds to patronising the religion he has publicly adopted, nor that the leaders of the Church gratefully accept his favours, quite blind to the fact that they are thereby selling their liberties, deliberately walking into a cage.

Constantine's favours took two forms. First, he

exempted the clergy from the obligation of filling municipal offices—a costly, burdensome obligation. This was already enjoyed by the pagan priesthood, so that in granting the privilege to the Christian clergy Constantine was only putting them on a level with the priests in the old temples. Similarly, when in England Nonconformist ministers share with Established Church clergymen exemption from the obligation of serving on juries, they do not regard this as a peculiar favour to Nonconformity. Still, in both cases there is a clear recognition of official status. Constantine's order was confined to North Africa in the first instance; subsequently it was extended to the whole empire.

Second, Constantine granted contributions from the imperial treasury for the building of churches and towards the support of the clergy. It may be said that similar grants had been made to the pagan temples and their officers, so that this was a case of concurrent endowment. But, as far as we know, all Constantine's favour in this form was shown to the Christians. Here was indeed a dangerous power—the power of the purse. In accepting the money of the State the Church was deliberately putting herself more or less under the control of the State. Besides, this favouritism, which was a departure from the large liberalism of the Edict of Milan in spirit, though not in the letter, roused the jealousy and alarm of the old temple authorities. Constantine was thus provoking to enmity a party with huge vested interests at stake. This party found a champion in Licinius, the second Augustus. Licinius could have been only a half-hearted supporter of the Edict of Milan; he was unable to resist Constantine's desire for his concurrence when it was issued, had he wished to do so. But at a later time he threw in his lot with the disaffected pagan party, and by means of the support he thus obtained broke connection with Constantine and claimed independence. So long as he could hold his own he pursued an openly pagan policy, forbidding the Christians to assemble in their churches,

and leaving them only to worship in the open air, excluding them from the civil service, banishing some, and perhaps even proceeding to inflict the death penalty in a few cases. But before he could go far in this direction his defeat by Constantine, followed by his death, put an end to the pagan reaction (A.D. 324).

As sole emperor, Constantine now had a free hand. For the second time, flushed with victory over a champion of paganism, he proceeded to a much more emphatic patronage of Christianity; he even issued a rescript urging his subjects to become Christians. There was no direct violation of the edict of toleration in this decree. Everybody was still left free to follow his own choice. The decree was but an exhortation. Still it meant much. Next we see Constantine interfering in matters of Church government. In the first instance this was on the invitation of the Christians for the settlement of the Novatian schism, a schism mainly turning on a question of discipline. Constantine was reluctant to interfere, and when he did so, he wisely appointed bishops as assessors. Still, the fatal step was taken. Before long emperors will be seen tampering with ecclesiastical affairs on their own initiative, without any appeal from the Church, and that even in questions of doctrine.

Nevertheless, Constantine was careful not to completely alienate the pagan party. He retained the office of Pontifex Maximus and thus secured his influence at Rome. He had the image of the sun-god impressed on one side of his coins, while the monogram of Christ was stamped on the other side. He ordered the Government offices and law courts to be closed on the Christian day of worship, but he referred to this day by its pagan title as "the venerable day of the sun." He went so far in the direction of syncretism as to order a prayer of pure theism for use in his army. His conception of Christianity was never very profound. At heart he seems to have been an eclectic theist with a distinct preference for Christianity and a measure of real belief in

it; and in these respects his State policy reflects his own ideas.

The effect of Christianity on legislation, always slow in so conservative a region where precedent is power, begins hopefully under Constantine. The emperor put an end to crucifixion—as a desecration of the cross of Christ, the breaking of the legs of criminals, and the branding of slaves. According to Eusebius he forbade sacrifices to idols, divination, the erecting of images, and gladiatorial combats.[1] If so, the law was a dead letter; for certainly all these things went on for generations after the time of Constantine. Possibly we have here a reference to some of his pious exhortations, such as that in which he invited all his subjects to become Christians. But although Constantine even patronised the amphitheatre as late as the year 323, when he received a panegyric for so doing, and two years later sanctioned the establishment of new gladiatorial games at Spello in Umbria—the force of public passion for this cruel sport being simply irresistible among the Italians—it was never introduced into his new city of Constantinople. Then, though slavery was continued, masters were forbidden to kill or torture their slaves, and manumission was facilitated. The cruel lot of prisoners was mitigated; they were not to be so chained up as to suffer from want of light and air. Debtors were not to be scourged, and they were to be brought to trial as quickly as possible. Above all, the position of woman was elevated. Adultery was treated as a crime to be punished; concubinage was forbidden, though intercourse with a female slave was not regarded as such; the old freedom of divorce was abolished; marriage received high sanctions; and assaults on consecrated virgins and widows were made punishable with death. Thus Constantine's legislation moved in the direction of humaneness and purity—two characteristic ideas of Christian ethics.

[1] *Vit. Con.* iv. 25.

CHAPTER III

ARIANISM

(*a*) The historians mentioned in the previous chapter; Athanasius, *Orationes Con. Arianos*, *Hist. Arianorum*, etc.; fragments of Philostorgius, the Arian historian.

(*b*) Gwatkin, *Arian Controversy*, 1889, a masterly authority; Newman, *Arians of the Fourth Century*, 1838—the 2nd edition, 1854, is unaltered, a vigorous but polemical treatise; Hefele, *History of the Councils*, Eng. Trans., vol. i., 1872.

ARIANISM caused the most serious division in the Church that has occurred during the whole course of the history of Christendom. It was the most momentous subject of controversy during the fourth century, the age of the greatest Fathers of the Eastern Church, the age of its keenest polemics and most masterly theological literature. The Nicene Creed, the essential standard of doctrine for the orthodox in the East, was formulated for the express purpose of excluding and crushing this heresy, which at times held its head so high, encouraged by imperial favour, that it threatened to dominate the Church and supplant the rival orthodox theology. So serious was the question deemed to be, that it was treated as of primary importance to the State, and the chief factor of politics throughout the century was the attitude of the emperors towards Arianism. During all this time it was essentially a question of the Eastern Church; the West was but little affected, although a protagonist in the controversy was Hosius of Cordova. Hilary of Poitiers was the only Western theologian of importance to take part in the controversy at this early stage. Much later, after Arianism had

been stamped out in the East, it became dominant in the West, coming in with the invading Goths who were heretics without knowing it, having become such in a way by accident, simply because the great missionary Ulfilas, to whom they owed their conversion happened to be an Arian. Thus the later Arianism of the West was purely adventitious, a mere result of the migration of peoples. The real home of Arianism is the East, and it is with the Eastern Church that the great controversy is almost entirely concerned. It therefore demands some attention in the present volume, although it has been treated in two previous works of the same Series.[1]

The origin of this tremendous controversy, which shook the whole fabric of the Church down to its foundations—like that of many a mighty river which may be traced back to a little runnel of water trickling down the hillside—was seemingly quite insignificant. Arius, from whom the heresy derives its name, was a presbyter of the Church at Alexandria, where the presbyterate retained its importance longer than in other places, and he exercised the functions of pastor in the neighbouring village church of Baukalis from about the year A.D. 313. Five years later (A.D. 318) he accused his bishop Alexander of Sabellianism. That his motive in doing so was jealousy on account of his disappointment at not having been elected to the episcopate has not been proved, and we must always be on our guard against the personalities that are continually being bandied to and fro among the ecclesiastical controversialists, and constitute the most painful and humiliating features of Church history. Alexander saved the situation by turning the tables on his daring opponent and accusing Arius of false teaching. Thus, as has often happened, the heresy-hunter himself turned out to be a heretic. There can be no doubt in this case that Arius was in the wrong. That Alexander was not a Sabellian is proved by his statement of his views contained in an important epistle. On the other hand, undoubtedly Arius was a heretic, in the

[1] Fisher, *History of Christian Doctrine*; Rainy, *The Ancient Church.*

technical sense of the term; that is to say, he advocated private opinions that were at variance with the general trend of Church teaching.

Although Arianism sprang up in Alexandria, its roots have been traced back to Antioch. Origen had taught a strong subordination doctrine; but he had affirmed the eternal generation of the Son, and the tone and temper of his thought were alien to what we see in Arianism. The great Alexandrian theology was intensely Platonic, and the development of the orthodox faith during the fourth century was largely controlled by an infusion of Platonism; but the dry, hard, logical method of Arius was Aristotelian, and so was that of the school of Antioch. Harnack says, "This school is the parent of Arian doctrine and Lucian its head is the Arius before Arius."[1] Nevertheless, Professor Gwatkin traces it to Alexandrian heathenism.

The gravamen of Arius' objection to Alexander's teaching was the doctrine of the eternity of the Son of God, which, he maintained, involved Sabellianism. On the other hand, the non-eternity of the Second Person of the Trinity was the starting-point of Arianism. Pressed into a corner, Arius will not say that "there was a *time* when He was not," because time itself did not then exist, since it began with creation, and He was before all other things; but he affirms that "there was when He was not." As he develops his system the following features emerge:—

1. The unity of God. He alone is neither generated nor created—eternal, essential being, τὸ ὄν, Deity apart from all else. Arius is in sympathy with the heathen and later Jewish conception of the transcendence of God.

2. The independent personality of Christ. Here Arius is in direct antagonism to Sabellianism. Extreme opponents of Arius—Marcellus, Photius, etc.—went over the knife-edge of orthodoxy on the other side and became Sabellian. Every system of thought that has enlisted the sympathies of earnest men has its merits, and one of the merits of Arianism is that it tended to rescue the

[1] *History of Dogma*, Eng. Trans., vol. iv. p. 3.

idea of a Mediator, of an actual personal Redeemer of the world revealed in the gospel, an idea that was becoming swamped in metaphysical conceptions of the Godhead.

3. The origin of Christ by creation. According to Arius, the sonship of Christ was only a figurative conception. God could not really have a Son begotten of His own nature. Christ must have been made, created out of nothing, and that by the will of God. He was made before all other creatures; and the difference between His origin and that of the rest of the universe was that He was created directly by God, while all other existences that came into being were created through Him.

4. He had no human soul. The exalted being Christ came down and was incarnate in a human body; that was all. Thus the problem of the nature of Christ was simplified. There was no complexity of a double consciousness.

5. Christ was naturally mutable. He could turn to evil, if He so chose.

6. A somewhat inconsistent part of the system was the contention that Christ received Divine honours in recognition of His worthy conduct. At this point Arianism is linked on to adoptionism. It is not easy to harmonise such a conception with Arius's idea of the pre-existing Christ; but the reconciliation is sought in the Divine foreknowledge. God foresaw how Christ would conduct Himself and rewarded Him accordingly by anticipation.

Arianism was an extremely simple system; herein was its recommendation. It professed to be free from the obscurities of the popular theology. It banished mystery from religion. Its appeal was to logic. Further, it claimed to be conservative, falling back on the verbal sense of Scripture against the speculative elaborations of metaphysical theology; but its range of scriptural authority was small, a mere group of texts arbitrarily selected and in some cases wilfully misapplied. In this matter both parties were almost equally guilty of offending against sound principles of textual exegesis.

Still, when we make due allowance for all such considerations, it may yet strike us as remarkable that a system so artificial in structure, and so harsh in outline, should have won its way in the Church. The objections to it were obvious. On the face of it Arianism toned down the honour that enthusiastic Christians were eagerly offering to their Lord. While it allowed of a Mediator, this strange being was neither God nor man, neither united to the Divine on the one hand nor to the human on the other. Thus the gulf still remained unbridged, and all that was offered was a monstrous figure standing isolated in the middle of it; or if we view the idea another way, while Christ was not one with us in human nature, He did belong to our created nature, so that if we think of God on one side of the gulf and creation on the other, Christ adheres completely to the side of creation, and there is no real mediation at all. Nevertheless, it is allowed that some measure of worship may be offered to Him, and He may be called God in a secondary sense, as the locust is called the "great power" of God.[1] But then, since He is but a creature, such worship is the worship of the creature, that is to say, idolatry. The essential paganism of the scheme was apparent to Athanasius, who urged this charge home against the Arians. They were importing the demi-god of the heathen world into the Church of the only true, living God.

Since these objections are obvious, we may wonder how it came about that Arianism got a lodgment in the Church, spread so rapidly, and attained to so much influence as was the case. Something may be set down to the personal fascination of its author. Athanasius' first attack on the heresy is based on its name, the Arians naming themselves after a man while the orthodox called themselves simply "Christians." This is significant, showing that the name was not a label attached to them by their enemies, like the title "Swedenborgian" commonly given to the community

[1] See Athanasius, *Orat. Cont. Arian.* i. 6.

that calls itself the "New Church." The Arians were proud of Arius—at least this was the case in the early days; later, when opprobrium had been heaped on his name, some of them were not so eager to claim it.

Arius appears before us as a strange figure—a tall, gaunt man, wearing his hair in a tangled mass, with a wild look in his eyes, and restless convulsive movements in his limbs, ascetic in his habits, generally grave and silent, but capable of fierce excitement when fairly roused, and very attractive in the earnestness of his manner and the sweetness of his voice. He resorted to a dubious device for the popularising of his doctrines, composing dry, didactic hymns in the metre of vulgar banquet songs, to the scandal of sober Churchmen, but indicating that he knew how to catch the ear of the public. These hymns would be sung to lively music and dancing—a curious compound of worldly gaiety and orgiastic pagan practices, inherited from the ancient religion of the Egyptians and continued down to the present day in the weird practices of the dervishes.

Still, it is doubtful if Arius would have made much headway if he had been left to propagate his ideas on their own merits and only by the force of his unaided influence. Alexander summoned a synod of neighbouring bishops which excommunicated the heretic, who then left Egypt and visited leading ecclesiastics in Syria and Asia Minor, from some of whom he received sympathetic treatment. But there was one man whose adhesion was the making of his cause. This was Eusebius of Nicomedia, the most powerful prelate in the East, an old friend of Arius, who soon became the real leader of the party, and to whom must be attributed the political character of the movement in its subsequent development. With the obscure presbyter Arius it was only a ferment working locally; under the hands of the great bishop Eusebius it leaped into imperial importance, so that the settlement of it became a first concern of the State with Constantine himself. After this, political intrigues in the interests of

men and parties had more influence in its dominance and extension than theological arguments. Although for long periods Arianism was the recognised religion of Eastern Christendom, this was mainly because the plots of diplomacy had secured for it imperial favour. A majority of the bishops of the Greek portion of the Church were Arian for a time, but only because the adherents of the opposite party had been violently deposed by acts of despotism and their successors thrust into their sees and imposed upon their flocks against the will of the people. There is nothing to show that the main body of the Church in the East was ever Arian; and certainly this was never the case in the West. Lastly, we must notice how the Arians obtained support from an unexpected quarter quite adventitiously, by the adhesion of the Meletians. These people, the party of Meletius, a bishop of Lycopolis, the modern Assiūt—in the fourth century second only in importance to Alexandria, who had been condemned purely on grounds of discipline and apart from any suspicion of doctrinal error, threw in their lot with the Arians, and so helped to swell the body of the heretics in common opposition to the dominant majority.

Fortified by the encouragement he had obtained when on his travels, Arius returned to Alexandria and organised a church of his followers in defiance of his bishop. This was an act of independence which could only be regarded by an ecclesiastic as one of rebellion. The crisis was becoming acute. So widespread was the quarrel now, and so bitter the spirit it was engendering, that it became a matter of serious concern to Constantine. This is a plain proof of its great importance.

Here is a pitiable situation indeed, a most painful instance of the irony of history. No sooner has peace been established between State and Church than the State interferes to preserve the peace of the Church. Still half a pagan, quite a novice, in character sadly below the Christian standard, the recently converted emperor finds

it necessary to rebuke the faults of the Church in order to prevent it from ruining its own cause. One might have thought that the Christians would have blushed for shame to have brought down upon their heads the moral disapproval of a convert. But that would be viewing the case from the emperor's point of view. To Alexander and his friends it would appear in a very different light. Constantine wrote a letter to Alexander urging a settlement of the dispute, on the calm assumption that the ground of it was quite trivial, and treating the bishops concerned almost as though they were a group of quarrelling schoolboys. Thus he says in the course of his letter: "For the cause of your difference has not been any of the leading doctrines or precepts of the Divine law, nor has any new heresy respecting the worship of God arisen among you. You are in truth of one and the same judgment; you may therefore well join in communion and fellowship. For as long as you continue to contend about these small and very insignificant questions, it is not fitting that so large a portion of God's people should be under the direction of your judgment, since you are thus divided between yourselves."[1] In reading such words we do not know whether to admire most the amazing arrogance that presumes to attempt the settlement of religious difference by a message of imperial authority, or the sublime simplicity that is totally incapable of perceiving the gravity of the question at issue or the depth of the fissure in the Church that it is producing. Not a "new heresy"—"one and the same judgment"—"small and very insignificant questions"—these are phrases that indicate total incapacity to grasp the actual issues of the dispute. The letter is a living, characteristic document, in every paragraph revealing its writer as the man of the world who would brush aside the most serious theological discussions as mere hair-splitting, but also the earnest, practical statesman who is anxious to

[1] *Vit. Const.* ii. 70, 71.

establish peace in the community for the government of which he is responsible.

Constantine's object was excellent; but it was not long before he learnt that the first method he had employed for securing it was utterly futile. This olive branch had no effect whatever; the document was literally a dead letter. It had been accompanied by one of the emperor's chaplains, a man highly venerated in the Church, who was to play a prominent part in the subsequent negotiations, Hosius, the bishop of Cordova. But even this good and able man's efforts at effecting a settlement on the spot were quite abortive.

Then the emperor resorted to another method much wiser, much more practical. He summoned the bishops of the whole Church to discuss the question and settle it by vote. This is the first instance of any attempt at a gathering representing the general body of Christians throughout the world. Local councils had been held in various districts —in Asia, at Rome, at Arles, at Carthage, at Alexandria, and elsewhere. Now for the first time there was summoned a general council, as distinguished from a provincial synod. It was the large-minded, widely comprehensive imperialism of Constantine that gave birth to the idea. The emperor summoned the council and paid the expenses of the members out of the funds of the State. This precedent was so much recognised in the summoning of later councils that the Church of England formally recognised it in the 21st of the Thirty-nine Articles: "General councils may not be gathered together but by the commandment and will of princes." Still, this council aimed at going beyond the limits of the empire in including the whole Church, and in point of fact two bishops from beyond its border—John of Persia and Theophilus of Scythia—were present in the assembly. The great idea was that the Church was to settle its disputes for itself. "Councils," writes Dean Stanley when summing up their characteristics, "are also the first precedents of the principle of representative government."[1]

[1] *Eastern Church*, Lecture II.

Presbyters and deacons were present, as well as bishops; and the latter were really popular representatives, since they had been elected by universal suffrage in their churches.

This first and most momentous general council met in the year A.D. 325 at Nicæa, a small town at the head of a sea loch where the Bithynian mountains descend towards the shore not far from Nicomedia, the emperor's Eastern capital before the building of Constantinople. The quarrel in the Church that occasioned the summoning of the bishops arose in the East and essentially concerned the East; the council met in the East; it consisted almost entirely of the representatives of Eastern churches. Although bishops had been called from all over the empire, and beyond, and although the proceedings of the council were recognised and endorsed in the West, it was to all intents and purposes an Oriental assembly. The same may be said of all the ancient councils; they were all held in the East and they all consisted almost entirely of Eastern prelates. At Nicæa there were only seven bishops from the whole area covered by the Latin Church. Sylvester, the bishop of Rome, was not present, his age being his reason or excuse for not attending, and he was represented by two presbyters. This was in no sense a papal council. It was not summoned by the pope; it was not presided over by the pope. Hefele argues that Hosius, who sat in a place of honour next to the emperor, was really in this position because he represented the West for the pope. But his close relations with Constantine and the leading part he had taken in the preliminary negotiations added to the weight of his personal character will account for the dignified position that was accorded to him. Besides, Sylvester's representation by the two presbyters is inconsistent with this notion. In the absence of the emperor Hosius appears to have presided in turn with three other bishops, Eustathius of Antioch, Alexander of Alexandria, and Eusebius of Cæsarea—the learned historian whom we must not confound with the Arian leader, Eusebius of Nicomedia. These three were all Eastern bishops.

The dangerous temper of the assembly was seen at the commencement, in the fact that a number of letters containing charges against various bishops were presented to the emperor; and Constantine's good sense and pacific intentions were as quickly revealed by his calling for a brazier at his first meeting with the council, and burning the whole sheaf of them unread. He had come to make peace, and his policy was toleration, not repression, or expulsion, or persecution. It was not his fault that the course of the discussion took another turn. Constantine spoke in a gentle voice and with a modest demeanour, calling himself a bishop, evidently with the sole object of softening the asperity of the debate and obtaining a pacific decision. But Arius was soon denounced in the most angry terms and expelled from the assembly.

Members of the lower clergy, although perhaps they had no votes, were allowed to be present and contribute to the discussion, so free and open was it. This liberty gave his opportunity to the hero of the whole controversy, the one man who was soon to tower head and shoulders over everybody else by sheer force of intellectual energy and moral earnestness, Alexander's attendant deacon, the young Athanasius. The romance of the Arian period circles round this great man in his strange adventures, his hairbreadth escapes, his magnanimous victories; but better than that, it is he who lifts the whole controversy out of the miserable arena of person and party, seizes on its really significant features, and holds to the vital issues notwithstanding calumny, spite, and brutal violence, with a tenacity that is perfectly heroic until he brings them out to a triumphant issue. Then, best of all, he reveals true greatness of soul and the generosity of a genuine Christian character, by insisting only on what is vital, by labouring to bury the old quarrel, by gladly welcoming back old opponents when they return to what he holds to be the true faith.

Guided by this young deacon, who soon proved himself to be the most masterly theologian present, the assembly that had quickly determined to stamp out Arianism was

able to accomplish the more difficult task of settling the positive creed of the Church. And yet Athanasius was far too real and large-minded to care much for the mere phrases of any creed. It is a significant fact that while he is the indomitable champion of the Nicene ideal, he rarely uses in his writings the term that became the watchword of the Nicene party and their battle-cry in conflict with opponents—the word *Homoousios*.[1] At an early stage of the discussion the Arians saw that there was no chance of their own specific phrases being allowed by the council. Accordingly they fell back on Scripture language. In their simplicity the majority of the Fathers seemed disposed to acquiesce in this way out of the difficulty. Then a bomb-shell was thrown into the meeting in the shape of a letter from Eusebius of Nicomedia, declaring the assertion that the Son was uncreated to be equivalent to saying that He was of one essence (*homoousios*) with the Father. The assembly seized on the word; it was just what they wanted. The Son was of one essence with the Father. So the fight raged round this word. Here the Arians had a certain advantage over their opponents. There was a taint of heresy about it. We first meet with it in a description of the notions of the Gnostic Valentinus.[2] And although, according to Pamphilus, it was used by Origen, and Tertullian employs the Latin equivalent of the relation of the Son to the Father,[3] it had been subsequently condemned in a synod at Antioch in connection with the heresy of Paul of Samosata, either as descriptive of his own idea of the Godhead, or in repudiation of Sabellian tendencies by his opponents. Thus the Arians were able to appeal to precedent, and pose as conservatives, when really appealing to prejudice. These two courses—the claim to use only Bible language in opposition to the defining phrases of scientific theology, and the objection to a dubious term as a dangerous innovation in the language of the Church—gave Eusebius and his friends some hold on the majority of

[1] ὁμοούσιος. [2] See Irenæus, *Adv. Hær.* i. 1.
[3] *Unitate Substantiæ, Apol.* xxi.; cf. *Adv. Praxean.* ii.

the council, which consisted of country pastors of no theological pretensions. It became necessary to expose the Arian tactics, and this was done successfully. Nevertheless, when the reaction came it was made apparent that the final decision of the council had been rather acquiesced in by the majority than intelligently conceived and earnestly desired. Certainly the majority were not Arian; but neither were they at this time convinced of the necessity of the technical language of the opponents of Arianism. Left to themselves they would have been satisfied with a simpler solution; but they were overawed by a few men of superior culture and great determination—especially Alexander, Athanasius, and Hosius. It was in this way that at length they were led to give an almost unanimous vote for the final definition.

The creed thus adopted was based on an old Palestinian confession introduced by Eusebius of Cæsarea. Hitherto there had been no one form of words accepted by all Christians as an expression of their faith. Although the "rule of faith" was recognised by Irenæus and insisted on with great vehemence by Tertullian, this could not have existed in any rigid verbal form, because it is variously worded in different places. Therefore the phrase would seem to represent simply a generally understood common agreement of belief. Still, as early as this time, *i.e.* by about the end of the second century, we have the Apostles' Creed at Rome in its primitive form. This, which is the most elementary of the creeds, is based on the baptismal formula,[1] the basis of all the creeds. But there is no reason to believe that any elaborate creed was actually repeated by converts at baptism. At first renunciation of the old life and faith in Christ were the only requisites. In the Æthiopic version of the *Apostolical Constitutions*, representing the oldest text, the candidate for baptism says, "I believe in the only true God, the Father Almighty, and in His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, and in the Holy Ghost the Giver of life"—with other phrases which must have

[1] Matt. xxviii. 19.

been inserted after the council of Nicæa. Meanwhile the creeds were growing up, probably as schedules of doctrine in use by the teachers of catechumens. In this way the example of Rome was followed, and thus among others was produced that early Palestinian creed which was adopted as the base of the Nicene Creed. When this was adopted by the council it became the first creed established by authority for the whole Church. Even then only the clergy were required to sign it. It was a test for the clergy, not a condition of membership in the Church. The laity were not required to assent to it. And yet a great step had been taken towards the fixing of orthodoxy. Hitherto there had been no one formal standard by which a Church teacher's doctrine could be settled. Now there was an end to this Ante-Nicene liberty. Henceforth any divergence from the established formula on the part of a bishop or priest would involve the loss of office and even excommunication. A series of stern anathemas was added to the creed to secure this end. All the members of the council were required to sign the document; the five who refused were deposed from the posts they held and expelled from the Church. The Catholic Church was now to be the orthodox Church, and orthodoxy was made the test of Catholicity.

On the other hand, it should be noted that points not in the creed were left open. When we consider how large a part of the field of theology was thus not fenced in, the silence becomes significant: moreover, if a standard of orthodoxy was necessary, here was one that guarded the very citadel of the faith. After all, when we penetrate behind phrases to facts, we see that with an earnest, large-minded man such as Athanasius the real test was not subscription to a highly technical creed; it was what that subscription implied, namely, loyalty to the Divine-human Christ.

Some other matters were also settled at the council of Nicæa. The Paschal controversy, which had divided some of the churches of Asia Minor who kept Easter on the

Jewish plan only according to the day of the month, from the churches of the West (and others that agreed with them) who fixed it according to the day of the week, was decided in favour of the Western usage. At the time many thought this as important as the Arian question. The Meletians were condemned and their ordination disallowed. Lastly, certain canons of discipline were passed. But the council had been summoned to settle the Arian dispute and its decision on this was absolute and peremptory. Then Constantine came in with the power of the State to enforce the ruling of the Church, denouncing the Arians as "Porphyrians," banishing Arius and his few determined followers, and ordering all Arian books to be burnt—which indeed was not so cruel as the action of the princes of the time of the Inquisition, who burnt the heretics themselves—and threatening death to anybody detected in concealing a book compiled by Arius[1]—a most significant, a truly ominous threat.

Nevertheless, the dispute was far from being settled. Instead of being the end, this was but the beginning of the great Arian controversy which was to ravage the Church and almost rend the empire for more than half a century longer, and even after that to linger on and break out again in unexpected quarters. It is true that at first the Arian protest was reduced to insignificant proportions. Two of Arius's friends deserted him and signed the creed; so that of the five who had supported Arius throughout the discussion only two bishops stood by him at the end and shared his penalty of exile. But a sign of coming trouble might have been detected in the conciliatory action of one of the most pacific of men. Eusebius of Cæsarea, the famous historian, the most learned scholar of his day, wrote to his Church explaining the sense in which he had signed the creed; and his explanation amounted to what was afterwards known as "Semi-Arianism," for he interpreted the test word "homoousios" in the sense of resemblance, saying that "it suggests that the Son of God bears no

[1] Socrates, i. 9.

resemblance to the creature, but is in every respect like the Father only who begat him."[1] Many must have given their assent to the creed without really knowing what they were signing; others must have been overawed by the imperial authority conjoined to the vehement insistence of the majority, and when released from the pressure of the council and the emperor's presence these people soon showed that they had no love for the creed, and some of them ventured to come forward as champions of Arius. Then an immense weight was swung into the scale of reaction. Constantine recalled the banished bishops and ordered the restoration of Arius. This amazing change of front has been attributed to the influence of his sister Constantia, who was a patroness of Eusebius of Nicomedia, to the fact—perhaps due to this court influence—that Eusebius superseded Hosius in the emperor's favour, to the diplomatic subtlety of the Arians, and to other causes, all of which may have played their parts in what had now become a political drama of huge dimensions. But we must not forget that Constantine's aim throughout was mainly peace and good order throughout his dominions. This was apparent in his first act of interference, the famous letter to Alexander. At first he had sought peace by silencing discussion; then, finding this expedient unsuccessful, he took the course of supporting uniformity and suppressing dissent; this too proving ineffectual, he returned to the idea of comprehension which he had advocated at first. But whether by forcible uniformity or by violent comprehensiveness, his aim was to end the irritating polemic. First he tried a soothing medicine; next he took up the surgeon's knife; finally he resorted to ecclesiastical splints, a forcible binding together of the body of the Church which he saw split by faction, working continuously with the one aim of ending the dispute. Thus at last the emperor appears in the paradoxical rôle of a despot insisting on toleration.

[1] Socrates, i. 8. There are several versions and accounts of the letter, but this appears to be the most sober and reliable.

Worn out by fatigues and anxieties, the aged Alexander died three years after the council of Nicæa (A.D. 328), nominating Athanasius his deacon to be his successor as bishop of Alexandria. The Church accepted his nomination, and duly elected the champion of the faith. Nevertheless this decision was challenged, and the most cruel charges were trumped up against the new bishop by absolutely unscrupulous enemies. The next chapter in the history of the Arian dispute is largely occupied with the romantic story of the adventures of Athanasius, his startling vicissitudes of fortune, his hairbreadth escapes, his heroic course of fidelity, though at times he seemed to stand alone. But this isolation was more apparent than real, for probably at no time was the majority of people in the Church Arian. The West was always at heart with Athanasius, when this was possible openly so; and great numbers of quiet people in the East did not really acquiesce in the Arian tyranny to which they were forced to submit. But Athanasius never allowed himself to be coerced into yielding. Meanwhile there were synods, packed with Arian bishops—at Tyre, removed to Jerusalem (A.D. 335), and at Constantinople (A.D. 336). Athanasius was condemned at Tyre on trumpery charges and banished to Trêves by Constantine, and Alexander the bishop of Constantinople, to his consternation, was ordered to receive Arius into the Church. The sudden awful death of Arius at the height of his triumph saved the bishop from his dilemma. The next year Constantine died, taking care to be baptised in his last illness.

CHAPTER IV

THE LATER ARIAN PERIOD

(*a*) Authorities mentioned in previous chapters; Basil, Gregory Nazianzen, Gregory of Nyssa (Eng. Trans. in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*); Ammianus Marcellinus, *Roman History* (Bohn).

(*b*) Works named in previous chapters; Rendall, *The Emperor Julian*, 1879; Gaetano Negri, *Julian the Apostate*, 2nd edit. 1902, Eng. Trans., 1905.

THE death of Constantine (A.D. 337), followed by the division of his empire between his three sons, Constantine II. and Constans in the West, and Constantius in the East, introduces us to a new chapter in the history of Arianism. The first of these rulers died three years later while fighting against his brother Constans, who thus became sôle master of the West, and there championed the Athanasian cause without difficulty, since Arianism found all its support in the Eastern provinces. Constantius, on the other hand, had Arian leanings, and he oppressed the orthodoxy that had seemed so triumphant at Nicæa a few years before. In so acting he was largely influenced by his jealousy of Athanasius, whose influence rivalled that of the emperor. This was a very different policy from the persecution of the Nicene party by Constantine, which had always been carried on in the name of toleration, in order to force the Athanasians to fraternise with the Arians. Pompous, vain, mean, cruel, Constantius was quite incapable of inheriting his father's large ideas; he was frankly intolerant, throwing his influence wholly into the scale of the Arian faction. At first, however, he was compelled to proceed warily and his

initial actions even favoured the Nicene party, so that for the moment his accession might have been regarded as the end of the oppression of orthodoxy. This was simply due to the influence of the Western emperors. Until he was firmly established in power, Constantius dared not openly flout his brothers' wishes. Thus we have the paradox that the exile of Athanasius, which had lasted to the end of the reign of the liberal-minded Constantine, was terminated by his Arianising son Constantius (A.D. 338). Then the patriarch was welcomed back to Alexandria in a scene of popular rejoicing that was compared to our Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. It was a shortlived triumph. The wily Eusebius of Nicomedia, past master of court intrigue, wormed himself into the favour of Constantius, got promoted to the Constantinople bishopric, and thence swayed the imperial counsels so effectually that the whole influence of the Government went to favour his party. The temper of the Arians against Athanasius was positively spiteful; but the new charge they now brought against him had some show of propriety. It was that he had been reinstated by the civil power without being restored by the ecclesiastical after his deposition at the council of Tyre. What could equal the effrontery of such an accusation on the part of men who were violating the decrees of the most august Church council, ruthlessly setting aside the bishops who adhered to them, and unhesitatingly accepting the emperor's interference to effect that end? Still it succeeded; and Athanasius was again banished and a Cappadocian, Gregory, sent from the court, was forced on the protesting Church at Alexandria amid outrageous scenes of violence (A.D. 339).

Since such unblushing conduct was seen at the headquarters of orthodoxy in the East, it may be surprising to observe how diplomatically the Arians had to work elsewhere. In wearisome succession, several councils—most of them packed meetings—were held in various places with the hope of getting a final settlement, and to that end distinctive Arian phrases were dropped and more neutral expressions substituted. At Sardica — now Sophia (A.D. 343) the

Athanasians were actually in a majority, and their opponents could only get their way by removing farther east, to Philippopolis—there to register their decisions comfortably without the inconvenience of opposition. This plainly shows that the mass of the Church was with Athanasius. The powerful Eusebius had died the year before the council of Sardica, and two years after that event Gregory also died—perhaps murdered. Things were not going well for the Arians, and Constans seized the opportunity to force his brother, under threat of war, to let Athanasius return to his see. Constantius actually himself received the patriarch quite graciously. But the death of Constans in 350 put an end to the truce. Now that Constantius was undisputed master of the empire, the Arians sprang into power and became quite overbearing and most truculent. After hairbreadth escapes and romantic adventures Athanasius fled up the Nile and took refuge with the monks in the desert. The venerable Hosius and Liberius the bishop of Rome were detained in captivity till their patience was worn down and they both signed a virtually Arian confession. It was a dark period for the Nicene faith. Still the time was not all lost. Athanasius in his quiet retreat now wrote some of his most important works, including his famous *Four Discourses on Arianism* and his *History* of the heresy. So things went on for eleven dreary years, till the death of Constantius (A.D. 361) brought deliverance from an unexpected quarter in the advent of a pagan emperor.

Julian, the cousin and successor of Constantius, has been execrated in the Church as "the Apostate." When at liberty to show his hand he manifested bitter antipathy to Christianity, after apparently having been baptised in his infancy—a fact, if this were the case, for which it would be hard to make him responsible. While in the power of his cousin Constantius, he had conformed, as he was bound to do unless he had developed a very precocious martyr conscience. But as soon as he was free to act for himself he threw off the hateful yoke of his oppressor's religion.

Consider in what light Christianity must have appeared to the boy Julian. It was the religion of the man who had murdered his father and every member of his family except one brother, and that merely in accordance with the Oriental monarch's drastic policy of clearing off dangerous rivals. Then Julian never knew true Christianity. The form in which it had been forced on him in his boyhood was Arianism; but that was by no means the worst feature of the case—the great apostle of the Goths was an Arian; Arianism could present an attractive aspect. But the young prince had been drilled in hard monkish ways. When he was out walking he had to keep his eyes fixed on the pavement in order to avoid the sight of vanity. He was allowed no companions of his own age. The specimens of Christian profession he witnessed in the circle of his acquaintance had little of the savour of godliness. They were court chaplains—adroit in political intrigue, fierce partisans of polemical theology, jealous ecclesiastics. Nothing was done to awaken in Julian an appreciation of the genuine graces of the gospel. But he was compelled to attend the heartless services that he inwardly loathed. Who can wonder that his young, ardent nature revolted, that his eager soul was full of bitterness? On the other hand, forbidden to attend the lectures of the Neo-Platonist Libanius, who was the greatest teacher of the day, he obtained copies of them, read them with the more avidity since "stolen waters are sweet," and at length allowed himself to be secretly initiated at the temple of Artemis. When Julian was permitted to go up to the university of Athens, he threw himself with hot enthusiasm into the intellectual life of this centre of pagan learning. He revelled in the classics, charmed with Hellenic culture, both its mythology and its philosophy. Intercourse with the liberalising pagan society at Athens made him look back with disgust on the old prison days, in which his tutors had been his jailers. Here he felt the pulse of a larger life, free and vivacious, sunny and natural.

Julian had no political ambition. Like Marcus Aurelius,

a much greater philosophical emperor, he was distressed at the call of duty that compelled him to plunge into practical affairs when he would so much have preferred the contemplative life. The difficulties of the empire having constrained Constantius to recall him from his studies and make a Cæsar of him, Julian is said to have exclaimed, "O Plato, what a task for a philosopher!" Yet he proved a capable general when in charge of the troops in Gaul, who forced him to become emperor in opposition to his cousin,[1] and a bloody conflict would have been the result if Constantius had not died just in time to prevent it. At first he was welcomed by all classes—Christian and pagan; for the tyranny of Constantius had become odious and unbearable. Julian began his reign with a proclamation of complete religious liberty. "Blows and injuries," he said, "are not things to change a man's religion." The effect of this reversal of policy was twofold. In the first place, it led to the return of the orthodox Catholic bishops from exile. The death of Constantius had been the signal for the people of Alexandria to rise in riot and murder George of Cappadocia, who, like Gregory at an earlier period, had been forced upon them as patriarch in the interests of Arianism. Then once more Athanasius was able to come back to his flock.

In the second place, the oppression of the old pagan religions which Constans and Constantius had carried on was ended for the brief period of the pagan emperor's reign. His predecessors had ordered all "superstition" to cease in the temples, and even threatened persons privately sacrificing with death—for so we must understand the references to earlier legislation in the Theodosian code. The active persecution, however, had not gone beyond the confiscation of temple property and the stern punishment of magic. Now Julian not only granted freedom for the worship of the old gods again; he ordered the confiscated property to be restored without compensation, a hardship on the holders of it for the time being in sharp contrast with Constantine's arrange-

[1] Amm. Marc. xx. iv. 14.

ment for the use of the funds of the State in buying back Church property for the Christians. Julian's whole influence leaned heavily on the pagan side. All the court favour was for men of the old religion; and under an absolute despotism this must have meant much, quite apart from any change of legislation. Knowing which way the wind blew, the enemies of the Christians ventured on many an act of violence in various localities, and always with impunity, and these local outbreaks led to cases of martyrdom, reminding people of the dark days of the Diocletian persecution. Thus, for insulting the sacrifices, Basil of Ancyra was flayed alive, slowly, seven strips of skin being peeled off at a time. Modern psychology will lend some credit to the story of a young man named Theodore who was tortured at Antioch by the reluctant prefect under orders from Julian to punish those people who had been most prominent in the procession that had transported the coffin of the martyr Babylas from Daphne, where its sacred contents were supposed to have silenced the oracle when Julian was consulting it, much to the emperor's annoyance. Rufinus got the story direct from the lips of its hero,[1] who in reply to a question whether in the process of scourging and racking he had not suffered the most intense pain, said that he felt the pain but a very little while, for a young man stood by him wiping off the sweat and so strengthening him that his time of trial was a season of rapture.

Later in his reign, Julian, annoyed at the failure of his attempts to galvanise the corpse of the old paganism into life again, began a subtle attack on the Christians by forbidding them to teach the classics in the schools, on the theory that the bible of paganism should only be taught by those who believed in it. So he said of them, "If they feel they have gone astray concerning the gods, let them go to the churches of the Galilæans and expound Matthew and Luke." To meet this severe blow at the culture of the Church, the two Apollinarises—father and son—set them-

[1] Rufinus, *Hist. Eccl.* i. 36, who is appealed to by Socrates as the authority for the story. See Socrates, iii. 19.

selves to the task of turning the Scriptures into verse, adopting the idioms of classic Greek in the work.

Julian might have proceeded to actual violence had he not been arrested in mid career. His early death when fighting the Persians came as a great deliverance to the alarmed Church. It was the end of a strange tragedy. With all his serious aims, the emperor had been made to see that his life was a failure. His own religion was a curious compound of old-fashioned paganism and Neo-Platonic ideas. He restored the worship of the gods at many a neglected shrine, and renewed the sacrifices on long deserted altars; but the misery of it all was that the people would not respond. He paid Christianity the sincere homage of imitation, organising a regular hierarchy with choirs and liturgical services and pulpits for the preaching of pagan sermons. He founded pagan monasteries and hospitals. It was all in vain. Nobody cared. He had all the zeal of a revivalist. Yet he was laughed at by the people of his own religion. It has been suggested that if he had promoted Roman instead of Greek religion he might have met with some success.

A strange figure!—as dirty as a saint, if only Julian had been a Christian, his grimy hands, his tangled beard—at which the people of Antioch laughed outright, his coarse clothing rarely changed,[1] would have earned him the honour of sanctity. Undoubtedly he was a conscientious religious devotee, as he was also an honest, indefatigable administrator. And yet directly he died the whole fabric of renovated paganism that he had toiled so strenuously but single-handed to build up fell to the ground like a house of cards. It may be said that he failed because he aimed too high. Perceiving that the old paganism was dying of its own rottenness, he set himself to be its reformer as well as its champion. He would support the pagan priests and supply the altars with sacrifices; but then these priests of his must show Christian sanctity in their conduct. But they had no wish to be screwed up to the new standard of virtue

[1] See Amm. Marc. XXII. xiv. 3.

in the name of the hoary old gods who hitherto had let off their worshippers on much easier terms. The dismal failure of this last attempt at the restoration of paganism with which its reformation was to go hand in hand was a plain proof that the whole system was outworn. With all his enthusiasm Julian's desperate efforts had proved to be no better than the galvanising of a corpse. It is true that paganism was not actually extinguished for years to come; indeed it is with us to-day, for it is inherent in human nature. The Church was able to make a place for it by developing her hagiology, which sheltered the ancient superstitions of the dead pantheon. But Julian's failure demonstrated once for all that the old cult of the gods, open and recognised, had gone, and gone for ever.

The simple soldier Jovian whom the army voted into the high position of emperor to rescue it from the Persians was an orthodox Christian, who, as Theodoret states,[1] hesitated to accept the honour till he was assured of the Christian sympathies, and with his accession to power the brief gleam of sunshine which had broken out so unexpectedly on the fading faith of the old régime died away never to revive. Not only paganism, but its sometime ally Arianism, also suffered by the accession of an emperor who belonged to the Nicene party. Jovian lost no time in reversing the policy of his predecessor, giving an early indication of this change by restoring the Labarum which Julian had laid aside. He issued an edict granting full religious liberty to his subjects. This was a revival of Constantine's large-minded statesmanship; it permitted Arianism and even paganism—which Constantius had persecuted. The immunities of the clergy were restored and the grants of public moneys for widows and consecrated virgins in the Church renewed. Jovian issued a decree condemning to death any who forced these virgins into marriage or even proposed marriage to them. Athanasius was now the greatest figure in the Church. Julian, after

[1] *Hist. Eccl.* iv. 1.

permitting him to return to Alexandria, had felt his powerful influence thwarting his plans and had banished him as "the great foe of the gods." We must distinguish this action which was clearly a piece of pagan persecution of Christianity from the many Arian attacks directed against Athanasius. With the accession of Jovian of course the great bishop was free to come back to his post. The emperor addressed him a letter of warm admiration, and obtained from him a reply setting forth the orthodox belief as opposed to Arianism.[1]

Unfortunately this state of things lasted but a very short time. Jovian was accidentally killed after only reigning eight months, being suffocated when sleeping in a room heated with a charcoal brazier.[2] He was succeeded by a military officer, Valentinian (A.D. 364), who was both orthodox and tolerant. But Valentinian assigned the eastern provinces of his empire to Valens his brother, who proved to be a bitter Arian, influenced, as Theodoret[3] says, by his wife. In spite of this fact, Valentinian was able to induce Valens to join him in signing an edict ordering that "those who labour in the field of Christ are not to be persecuted nor oppressed, and that the stewards of the Great Ruler are not to be driven away."[4] After this it may strike us as surpising that Valens should have been allowed to persecute the Nicene party, and Gibbon endeavours to discredit the idea that he did so before the death of Valentinian, which occurred in the year A.D. 375.[5] But he ventures on this doubt in the teeth of the unanimous testimony of the Church historians, who agree in describing acts of cruelty, including one almost incredibly barbarous crime, as committed during the lifetime of the elder brother. The story of this outrageous deed is that eighty men—Theodoret says "presbyters"—who had come as a deputation to Constantinople were sent out to sea in an unballasted ship and there burnt to death by men who had accompanied them in

[1] Theodoret, iv. 3.
[2] Amm. Marc. xxv. x. 12, 13.
[3] *Hist. Eccl.* iv. 12.
[4] *Op. cit.* iv. 8.
[5] *Decline and Fall*, chap. xxv.

another vessel with orders to execute them in this horrible way (A.D. 370).[1]

Although we may hesitate to believe so amazing a story —and it is not easy to accept it even on the positive testimony of our authorities—there can be no question as to the outrages which were witnessed at Alexandria after the death of Valentinian had left the Arians in Valens' half of the empire free from all restraint. The pagans were glad of an opportunity for uniting forces with any opponents of the orthodox Church, and of course the men of the baser sort would be only too ready to seize their chance of a share in any commotion that was going on. Common decency compels us to ascribe to these lower elements of the population, the dregs of a dissolute city, doings with which no Christian however "heretical" he might be would disgrace himself. Thus the mob invaded the church of St. Thomas; a young man in woman's clothing danced on the altar; another young man sat naked in the bishop's chair, from which he openly preached immorality to a crowd that roared with laughter at what they took to be a fine joke; virgins of the Church were stripped, scourged, violated. In fact, the recent Bulgarian and Armenian horrors were anticipated by the Alexandrian atrocities committed in the name of Christian theology. During these troubles an attempt was made to seize Athanasius, but once again the old man escaped as though by miracle, and this time he hid himself in his father's tomb. The best testimony to the weight of the great bishop's influence may be seen in the fact that even after all this Valens was induced to let Athanasius return to his beloved flock. That was the end of his wanderings. Although the Arian persecution still

[1] Socrates, iv. 16; Sozomen, vi. 14; Theodoret, iv. 24. None of these writers charge Valens with the diabolical device by which the obnoxious deputation was got out of the way—evidently from fear of interference from the people of Constantinople if the victims were not put beyond the reach of rescue. Theodoret ascribes the crime to "the Arians of Constantinople." But he is an untrustworthy writer. Both Socrates and Sozomen state that the emperor secretly ordered the prefect to put the men to death, and that it was this prefect who carried out his master's command in the manner described on his own account.

raged in other places, henceforth the venerated patriarch of Alexandria was able to hold his own without further molestation till his death in the year A.D. 373. No hero of romance ever passed through more strange adventures and hairbreadth escapes. Singled out by four emperors—Constantine, Constantius, Julian, and Valens—as a peculiarly dangerous person, hated with murderous passion by the Arian faction, no less than five times driven into exile, Athanasius always maintained the affection of his flock, and throughout the long oppression was known to all the world as the sure champion of the Nicene faith. He may not have been so profound a theologian as his contemporary Hilary in the West, nor as the Cappadocians of the succeeding generation in the East; but undoubtedly he was a very great man indeed, of proved integrity, loyal faith, unflinching courage, wise statesmanship, large-hearted charity; the supreme hero of his period, and one of the best, truest, strongest Christians the world has ever seen.

Athanasius had lived to see remarkable changes in the Arian contention and some modification of the orthodox position, although his own position remained firm on the ground of the Nicene confession of his youth. Arianism split up into several parties each with its own watchword. The most important novelty was that of the Semi-Arians, who endeavoured to formulate definitely the mediating ideas which had appeared at the time of the council of Nicæa in the explanations of the creed which Eusebius of Cæsarea had given his Church. It is not fair to call the great historian a Semi-Arian. No party which could bear that name was known in his day: he accepted the creed, which at a later time the Semi-Arians wished to alter, although he explained its test word *homoousious* in his own way, and he lived and died in communion with the orthodox Church. The watchword of the Semi-Arians was *Homoiousios*—"like in essence." Gibbon's sarcasm on the division of the Church on a diphthong is as shallow as it is bitter. The faintest difference in spelling may involve a world-wide difference of meaning. There can be no ques-

tion that with Athanasius *homoousios* meant identity of essence or substance, so that He who came "from the essence"[1] of the Father not only resembles the Father but is inseparable from the essential being of the Father. Thus he says, "We must not imagine three divided substances in God, as among men, lest we like the heathen invent a multiplicity of gods, but as the stream is born of the fountain and not separate from it although there are two forms and names," and asserts the Son's "identity with His own Father."[2]

A conviction thus deliberately stated is not to be set aside by appealing to the unquestionable fact that there are instances in which Athanasius uses the word *homoousios* of separate existences in the sense of identity in nature.[3] It has been asserted that he gave up insisting on his earlier rigorous use of the word and would allow any one as orthodox who would adopt it even in the sense in which it is employed of man and man. But even if that be admitted—and Athanasius had no sympathy with verbal pedantry and was really anxious for the cause of charity and peace—he must not be supposed to have agreed to the Semi-Arian position, since he no more accepted the Semi-Arians themselves than the full-fledged Arians.

Subsequently two other parties emerged. First, the extreme Arians stiffened their position and sharpened their antitheses against the mediating Semi-Arians. Thus they changed their tactics entirely. In the earlier period Athanasius had accused them of shiftiness and a vagueness of language deliberately chosen in order to throw dust into their opponents' eyes. This was their policy at the council of Nicæa when they saw themselves in a hopeless minority, and the insincerity of it was one of the heaviest accusations brought against them by Athanasius in his Orations.[4] But during the Arian ascendancy under Valens the situation was very different, and now the extreme Arians, seeing no further need of compromise, went so far as to declare that

[1] ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας. [2] *Nicene Def.* 9; cf. *Orat.* i. 20, 22.
[3] e.g. *de Sent. Dionys.* 10; *de Synodis*, 51.
[4] e.g. *Orat.* i. 8, 31.

the Son was "unlike" the Father, and thus came to be designated "Anomœan."[1] They were also called "Aëtian," after Aëtius a deacon at Antioch, said to have been very disputatious in pushing the dry Aristotelian logic that characterised Arianism generally to its ultimate issues, and therefore maintaining that since the Son was a creature He must be unlike the Father, not only in essence, but also in will. Another name given to these ultra-Arian Arians was "Eunomian," after Eunomius the bishop of Cyzicum, who went even farther, discarding all mystery in religion and holding that man can know as much of God's nature as God Himself can know.

Such extravagance led to a revolt of sober minds. The court party took a more politic line. Sometimes named "Acacians" after Acacius the successor of Eusebius of Cæsarea, they maintained a vague and moderate view nearer to that of the great historian, coming between the Semi-Arians and the Anomœans, though in a very different temper. They were content to say that the Son was like the Father,—and therefore were called "Homœan,"[2]—and to dispense with further definitions, affecting to fall back on Scripture language and condemning the Semi-Arians equally with the Nicene bishops for employing an unscriptural term. But it was now too late for the plea of conservatism with which Arius had tried to win over the simpler country pastors at Nicæa. These Homœans were regarded as unscrupulous, crafty politicians, who really agreed with the extreme Arians, but disavowed them whenever it suited their convenience. The existence of such a party in influence at court even under Valens is a plain proof that the Nicene belief had strong hold of the people as a whole; and the breaking up of Arianism into mutually antagonistic factions was a sure sign of its approaching downfall, as it was also an evidence that the shot and shell poured in by the great orthodox theologians was doing deadly work against the Arian positions. These three parties—the Homoiousian, the Anomœan, and Homœan—by their mutual antagonisms were preparing for the triumph of the Homoousian.

[1] ἀνόμοιος. [2] ὅμοιος.

CHAPTER V

THE CAPPADOCIAN THEOLOGIANS

(*a*) *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Basil, Gregory Nazianzen, Gregory of Nyssa; Socrates, Sozomen, Theodoret, Philostorgius.

(*b*) Besides works on the history mentioned in earlier chapters, Bright, *Age of the Fathers*, vol. i., 1903; R. Travers Smith, *St. Basil the Great*; Ulmann, *Gregorius von Nazianz de Theologe*, first part of first edit. trans. by Cox; Newman, *Church of the Fathers*, pp. 116–145; Ceilier, *Auteurs Eccles.*, tom. vii.; Tillemont, *Memories*, ix.; Dorner, *The Person of Christ*, Div. I., vol. ii.; Ottley, *The Incarnation*, vol. ii., part v., 1896; Lietzmann, *Apollinaris von Laodicea*, 1904.

THE second half of the fourth century is the most brilliant period in the theological literature of the Greek Church. This fact creates a sore temptation to spend some time in the company of its great men rather than to hasten on to duller scenes and poorer minds. But the immense field to be covered by the present volume compels that act of self-denial, and the more so since we are still dealing with the age of a united Catholic Church. Nevertheless, not only on their own account, but also for the sake of coming to a right understanding of the life and thought of later centuries in the East, we must have some conception of the teachings of the men who did most to shape the orthodoxy which it became the business of subsequent generations to defend.

After Athanasius, who stands apart, the one magnificent hero of the first half of the fourth century, the three greatest theologians of the orthodox Eastern Church appear in the second half of that remarkable century, all of them natives of the province of Cappadocia. These are Basil,

Gregory Nazianzen, and Basil's brother, Gregory of Nyssa. The first two were highly educated in the university culture of their day; and, although Gregory of Nyssa was privately trained by Basil, he was even more well-read in classical literature. In these leaders of the Church, therefore, we see men endowed with a first-class liberal education bringing to bear on the problems of theology knowledge of the best things that have been said and done during past ages in the large outer world. In this respect we may compare them with the Alexandrians, Clement and Origen, a century and a half before, or with such men of the "New Learning" among the Reformers as Erasmus and Melanchthon. Of these three Basil was the most prominent in his own day, since he was a man of affairs as well as a scholar and writer, energetic, courageous, masterful. He was born at Cæsarea, the capital of Cappadocia, in the year 329. Having distinguished himself at school in his native town, he was sent by his father to study at Constantinople and perhaps at Antioch under Libanius—the famous lecturer so much admired by Julian.[1] After this he went to the university of Athens, then the intellectual centre of the civilised world, and there began his life-long friendship with Gregory Nazianzen, the two spending some years together in the delightful atmosphere of rich scholarship and refined thinking which was so congenial to both of them. Here too Basil met the future Emperor Julian and became intimate with that eager student on their common ground of intellectual interests. Flushed with the scholar's fame he had returned to Cæsarea, apparently as yet having no perception of his great mission, when his sister Macrina turned his thoughts to the higher aims, and he was baptised. Then he determined to devote himself to the ascetic life, and appointed a bailiff for his estate—for he was a wealthy landowner and always behaved like an aristocrat. Basil

[1] Socrates, iv. 26; Sozomen, vi. 17. But a doubt has been raised on this point, and it has been suggested that his namesake, a friend of Chrysostom, may be confused by the historians with Basil of Cæsarea. See Blomfield Jackson, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. xiii. p. xv.

spent five years in the desert of Pontus, where he founded monastic establishments. He slept in a hair shirt, he had but one meal a day, and he lived only on a vegetable diet. The sun was his only fire. His constitution was not robust; and on one occasion, when the governor of Pontus threatened to tear out his liver, Basil replied, "Thanks for your intention; where it is at present it has been no slight annoyance."

Basil's monasteries were schools of Nicene orthodoxy, at which the clergy who had been banished from their churches took refuge and trained up a generation of men faithful to the oppressed faith, and Basil himself was indefatigable in labouring for its restoration. It seemed as though the mantle of Athanasius had fallen on his shoulders. Throughout the East he was recognised as the champion of the Nicene cause. At length some Church troubles led his friend Gregory to urge his recall, and on the death of the bishop he was elected to the bishopric of Cæsarea (A.D. 370).

Basil's commanding character was now felt most powerfully all over Syria and Asia Minor. When the prefect Modestus proposed to the bishops of his district the alternatives of Arianism or deprivation in accordance with the orders of the emperor Valens, he came to Basil and urged him to yield to the will of his "Sovereign." "I have a sovereign," he answered, "whose will is otherwise, nor can I bring myself to worship any creature" (alluding to the Arian Christ). The prefect threatened confiscation, exile, torture. "Think of some other threat," was the fearless man's reply; "these have no influence on me." Modestus was constrained to respect the great bishop's firmness, and he appealed to the emperor, who soon after visited Cæsarea, where, awed by the presence of Basil—the old writers add, by the miracles he wrought—he was generous enough to dismiss the bishop and his friends without punishment. Basil did not live to see the restoration of the Nicene faith. He died in the year 379.

The principal extant works of Basil consist of homilies entitled *Hexæmeron*, on the six days of creation; five books

Against Eunomius, the extreme Arian, the last two of which are sometimes regarded as by another hand; an important work upon the *Holy Spirit*; *Letters*, which give a vivid picture of the writer's life and its surroundings; various ascetic works and sermons. The "Liturgy of St. Basil" and the "Liturgy of St. Chrysostom" subsequently used in the East were in all probability both based on an older liturgy that Basil used and gave to his clergy.

In defending the Nicene position Basil developed a new terminology which we may take as indicating some change of view. With Athanasius there is in God one *ousia* [1] (essence) or *hypostasis* [2] (substance), the two words being synonymous. But, according to Basil, while there is one *ousia*, there are three *hypostases*; and in this change of terminology the two Gregories agree, so that under the influence of the Cappadocian theologians it passes over into the language of the Greek Church. Meanwhile in the Latin Church there was no change of usage. Here it was taught all along that in the Trinity there was one *substantia* existing in three *personæ*.[3] But the Latin Church used the word *substantia* as equivalent to both the Greek words *ousia* and *hypostasis*. Thus the East saw three *hypostases* in the Trinity, but the West only one. The difference however was not so great as it appeared to be on the surface. The Greeks had no word equivalent to the Latin *persona* which they could use with safety, because the nearest corresponding term, *prosopon*,[4] was already appropriated in a Sabellian sense for a mere phase or aspect of God without any real distinction of person. Since the Arians were constantly charging the Nicene party with Sabellianism, it would never have done to adopt so suspicious a word. Accordingly a new term had to be found for what the West regarded as the *personæ*, literally the "characters" (as the word is used in a drama) of the Trinity, and

[1] οὐσία. [2] ὑπόστασις.

[3] It has been suggested that the great test word was of Latin origin—ὁμοούσιον being a translation of *unius substantiæ*—an improbable hypothesis.

[4] πρόσωπον.

hypostasis was taken over for this purpose. Nevertheless the change was more than verbal. Basil treated the difference between *ousia* and *hypostasis* as equivalent to that between common and proper nouns, as between "man" and "Peter, Paul, John, or James."[1] When it was objected that the term *homoousios* implied a kind of division and distribution of a previously existing substance, Basil replied, "The idea might have some application to brass and coins made of it; but in the case of the Father and of the Son the substance of one is not older than that of the other, neither can it be conceived as superimposed on both."[2] We must remember that the orthodox Greek theologians were Platonic in their spirit and thought, so that to them the idea corresponding to a general term was a high reality. Nevertheless, language such as this reveals a growing tendency to emphasise the numerical distinction between the persons in the Trinity. Surely Harnack goes too far when he regards this as virtually the adoption of the Semi-Arian position,[3] for the firm adhesion to the unity of the substance (the *ousia*) seems to preclude that amazing conclusion. But undoubtedly some approach to it was made, perhaps in part owing to the fact that most of the Semi-Arians were coming over to the orthodox Church. The final result was that without any formal divergence of doctrine, while in the West the emphasis was always laid on the unity of the Godhead, in the East it came to be put more on the division of the persons.

Gregory Nazianzen was in some respects the opposite, or the complement, to his friend Basil in nature and disposition. An indefatigable student, retiring and unambitious, he would never have come out into a position of responsibility if this course had not been forced upon him, or at all events reluctantly accepted by him under a strong sense of duty. He was born in the year 325, or a little later, at Nazianzus in Cappadocia, where his father, the elder

[1] Letter 38. [2] Letter 52.

[3] *History of Dogma*, Eng. Trans., vol. iv. p. 82.

Gregory was bishop, honourably illustrating as late as the fourth century the right of bishops to live in the married state. He appears to have first met Basil at Cæsarea, where he had been sent to school. The schoolboy attachment ripened into a life-long friendship. Afterwards studying at Cæsarea in Palestine, and then at Alexandria, he came on at length to the great university of Athens, where he found Basil already winning a brilliant reputation for scholarship. In his funeral oration over his friend he gives a vivid account of university life at the classic centre of culture during the fourth century. Theatres, wine parties, frivolous discussions dissipated the time and energies of fashionable students. But the two Cappadocians had come to work, and sternly avoiding all these distractions, they gave themselves to severe study. Gregory stayed on longer than his friend, apparently for twelve years altogether, from the age of eighteen till he was past thirty. At last, fascinated by the attractions of the devotional life, he joined Basil for a short time in his Pontic retreat.

In the year 360 Gregory returned home, probably to assist his father. Much against his will, but at the urgent wish of the people of Nazianzus, his father ordained him presbyter. It was "good form" to appear reluctant to take office in the Church; but evidently Gregory's shrinking from the responsibility was genuine; he even described his ordination as an act of tyranny, and immediately after fled to his old retreat with Basil. His *Defence of his Flight* to Pontus —his first sermon after his return—sets forth the loftiest ideal of the Christian ministry with a richness of thought and a passionate earnestness of feeling that make this book live to-day as truly as Baxter's *Reformed Pastor*—a work on similar lines. But he could not long resist the call of duty. Subsequently Basil forced him to the episcopate of a little posting-station named Sasima, a noisy, dusty village of one narrow street with no grass or trees in its neighbourhood. The masterful Basil did this for the benefit of his friend's soul, as a discipline in submission and humility—an action the merit of which was not highly appreciated by its victim.

After an obscure time at Seleucia in Isauria he was dragged out into the glare of day by being appointed to the charge of the one orthodox Church at Constantinople, when the Arian tyranny was at its height. There he preached his famous *Five Theological Orations*, which placed him in the foremost rank of Christian preachers; they are not unworthy of comparison with the utterances of the classic Greek orators. His sermons are his greatest works; after them his letters and his poems claim our interest.

On the accession of Theodosius, Gregory was rewarded for his fidelity in holding the fort during the Arian period by being made patriarch of Constantinople. In virtue of this fact he presided at some of the sessions of the council that assembled in that city in the year 381, till, feeling unequal to the distasteful task of maintaining order amid the wrangling of the bishops, he retired to his home at Nazianzus, although according to Socrates [1] he had "surpassed all his contemporaries in eloquence and piety."

Gregory defended the Nicene position, as held by himself and Basil, by elaborating the mysterious connection of unity and threefoldness in the Trinity. He explained that the unity of the "monarchy" [2] consisted in "common dignity [3] of the essence," "harmony of sentiment," [4] "identity of motion," [5] and "inclination" [6] of the Son and the Spirit towards the Father. How striking, even startling, are these various expressions, one and all indicating the distinctions of individuality in the Trinity even when toiling to find means to express the idea of the unity—so characteristic of the later development of the Nicene theology, so different from the attitude of the Western Church! Only the underlying Platonism can save such language from a charge of tritheism. But the unity is really found in the idea of derivation. The Son and Spirit are twin rays from one light and that by an eternally continuous process.

The third of the great Cappadocians was Basil's

[1] *Hist. Eccl.* v. 7.
[2] *μοναρχία.*
[3] *ὁμοτιμία.*
[4] *γνώμης σύμπνοια.*
[5] *ταύτης κινήσεως.*
[6] *σύννευσις.*

younger brother Gregory of Nyssa, who was born about A.D. 335 or 336. Owing to the delicacy of his health he enjoyed none of the university advantages that fell to the lot of Basil and Gregory Nazianzen. He was privately educated by his brother Basil, and he became a great reader on his own account. After this it is significant that he proved to be a much more original thinker than either of the two highly-tutored senior members of the famous trio. Basil appointed him bishop of the little town of Nyssa (now *Nirse*) in the west of Cappadocia. During the Arian persecution under Valens he was driven from his church on a charge of irregularity of appointment by a too subservient synod held at Nyssa, and then banished by the emperor, to be restored after the death of Valens and "the crash of Hadrianople." On the death of Basil he became one of the two leading defenders of the faith.

Gregory of Nyssa is chiefly interesting to us on account of the profound arguments and daring speculations with which he justified the orthodox view against the Arians. These are elaborated in his great work *Against Eunomius*, as well as in some of his shorter writings. The Nicene fathers had simply thundered out a great affirmation—strong, definite, conclusive—still only an affirmation, a bare assertion voted by authority. Even Athanasius was content for the most part to defend it by rebutting false conceptions while tearing the rival theory to shreds. Gregory of Nyssa goes further. He digs into the roots of the mighty affirmation; he seeks to justify it metaphysically; he carries orthodox theology into the free atmosphere of philosophy and there attempts to argue for its truth on principles of abstract reason—a daring, a perilous effort, but still one that some minds not satisfied with authoritative dogma might welcome with a sense of liberty and enlargement. In particular, Gregory helped to develop a new line of thought that opened up fruitful sources of discussion among subsequent writers. Hitherto the nature of Christ had been almost exclusively considered on its Divine side. The one question had been,

How did He stand related to God? The orthodox were content to affirm His full Divinity and also to assert the fact of the incarnation; but they made no attempt to correlate these two truths. They had no theory as to how the Divine and the human could subsist together, how there could be such a fact as an incarnation at all. The full discussion of this most difficult problem belongs to the controversies of later times—those of the fifth and sixth centuries. But before the end of the fourth century there had emerged a burning question as to the actual presence of complete human and Divine natures in the Person of Jesus Christ. Now both the Gregories, but Gregory of Nyssa the more emphatically of the two, followed Origen in pronouncing for a real human soul in Christ. According to Gregory of Nyssa, this was transformed under the influence of the Divine Nature after the resurrection and ascension. The very body of Christ was then sublimated into the essence of the Divine Nature, so that it has laid aside the attributes of gravity, shape, colour, and all limitation. Thus we have the omnipresence of that glorified body, for the body of Christ was transmute to the flesh of God by the indwelling word.[1] It is easy to see how readily such a theory would agree with the doctrine of transubstantiation, a doctrine which Gregory did more than anybody else of his period to advance.[2]

On the other hand, Apollinaris the younger, of Hierapolis, took the opposite line. A man of great intellectual power, he made an original attempt to shape an intelligible conception of the incarnation. But by abolishing its mystery he virtually denied the fact. His *motif* was opposition to Arianism. Nevertheless, he shared with Arius a view which the Church always rejected as false and fatal to the central idea of the gospel, the coming of the Divine into the human; for he too denied to Christ a complete human nature. Like Arius, he was Aristotelian in temper of mind and method of thought. His clear,

[1] *Oratio catechetica magna*, 37.

[2] See Hebert, *The Lord's Supper*, vol. i. pp. 202–209.

crisp logic worked out definite conclusions without regard to side issues. Accepting the tripartite division of man into body or flesh, soul, and mind or spirit,[1] he ascribed to our Lord only the first two, and taught that the spirit or higher consciousness of Christ was purely of Divine Nature, the Son of God, the Second Person of the Trinity. He thought that you must sacrifice the personality on one side or the other. Paul of Samosata had sacrificed it on the Divine side; with him Christ was only a man completely influenced by God, the ego, the centre of personality and self-consciousness being human. To allow of two spirits or minds is to admit two wills—which the Church did actually admit and even affirm on peril of excommunication at a later time,—and so two persons. Then the human mind[2] is naturally changeable, owing to its possession of free will; but to say that Christ was changeable was Arian, the Nicene party denying this. Further, Apollinaris thought that the usual way of representing the nature of Christ was inconsistent with the doctrine of redemption, since it only allowed the man Jesus, not the Divine Christ, to have suffered for us.

Apollinaris was vehemently assailed for the denial of the incarnation these ideas were supposed to involve. But he endeavoured to save that mystery in another region. Since man was made in the image of God, there must be something in God which is like man. In other words, there must be an inherent humanity in God. Now it was that man-like element in God which entered into earthly human nature in the incarnation of Jesus. Therefore it would exactly correspond to a perfect human spirit. We might compare this view to the Semi-Arian, by applying to the human nature of Christ the watchword that the Semi-Arians used to describe His Divine Nature, and say that, while the Athanasian party regarded Christ as *homoousios* with us in His humanity, Apollinaris considered Him to be only *homoiousios* with us. It will be found that most

[1] The Greek *σῶμα, ψυχή, νοῦς*; the New Testament *σάρξ, ψυχή, πνεῦμα.*
[2] *νοῦς.*

subsequent approaches to an explanation—over and above the mere orthodox affirmation—of the incarnation have moved in the direction here indicated by Apollinaris; they have denied the existence of the enormous gulf commonly thought to separate human nature from God, and they have asserted a natural affinity between God and man, a something in us that is akin to God, and therefore correlatively a something in God that is akin to us. Some zealous opponents of Arianism were driven by the recoil of their attack on the heresy back on the Sabellianism that Arius had originally set out to resist. Thus they played into the hands of their opponents, who could turn round on the Nicene party saying, "There; that is just what we told you—you are Sabellian." Marcellus of Ancyra was one of these too thoroughgoing champions of the homoousion doctrine. He was a friend of Athanasius, who long defended him from the suspicion of Sabellianism; but when at last his position became too clear to be doubted, the great patriarch was driven to correct him.[1] Still more pronounced was the Sabellianism of his disciple Photinus, bishop of Sirmium, who was condemned in a synod at that city.

Meanwhile the Arians were pushing their views to a logical conclusion with regard to the whole conception of the Trinity. At first only the doctrine of the nature of Christ was in question. But the enquiry could not stop there. The notions we entertain concerning the second Person of the Trinity must affect our ideas of the third. If the Son is a creature, it will be impossible not to assert that the Spirit also is a creature. Athanasius met with this view when in exile in the Thebaid, coming across Arians who went beyond Arius in asserting that the Holy Spirit was not only a creature but "one of the ministering spirits";[2] he says they were called *Figuraturists*, and *Fighters against the Spirit*.[3] Probably not much would

[1] *Oration against the Arians*, iv.

[2] καὶ τῶν πνευμάτων λειτουργικῶν ἓν αὐτὸ εἶναι, *Letters to Serapion*, 4.

[3] τροπικοί, πνευματομαχοῦντες.

have been heard of this by-product of Arianism—since the battle was raging round the doctrine of Christ—if it had not succeeded in obtaining a champion in high quarters. Macedonius the patriarch of Constantinople maintained the same position, and consequently the party who agreed with him was known as Macedonian. Since this consisted largely of Semi-Arians, unlikely as we might have supposed it, the orthodox were quick to seize the new weapon, and call all the Semi-Arians Macedonians. But that was not just.

With this babel of voices from Eunomians, Acacians, Semi-Arians, Macedonians, Apollinarians, followers of Marcellus and Photinus, rending the air, all more or less opposed to the party of the three Cappadocians in their support of the Nicene position, there seemed to be an urgent need for another general council of the Church to settle the various disputes involved. Accordingly, Theodosius summoned a synod of the Eastern bishops at Constantinople. This synod is reckoned to be the second Œcumenical Council, none of the councils—at Tyre, Constantinople, Antioch, Sardica, Sirmium, Rimini—which had met in the interval since Nicæa, being regarded as of that character. And yet even this council at Constantinople only represented the Eastern half of the Church. Not a bishop from the West was present. Theodosius only ruled over the Eastern branch of the empire, and he was only able to command the bishops within the area of his jurisdiction. The sole justification for regarding the council as œcumenical is the fact that its decisions were accepted by the bishop of Rome and the Church of the West. This council first assembled in the year A.D. 381; then it broke up for a time. It reassembled the next year. There were 150 bishops present. The first president was Meletius of Antioch; but he died during the discussions and was succeeded by Gregory Nazianzen, who, as we have seen,[1] retired because he felt out of his element among the wrangling, quarrelsome theologians, and his place was then

[1] P. 77.

taken by Nectarius, his successor in the patriarchate of Constantinople. The council reaffirmed the Creed of Nicæa and anathematised Eunomians, Semi-Arians *or* Pneumatomachoi, Sabellians, Marcellians, Photinians, Apollinarians. Our "Nicene Creed," which differs slightly from the creed as it was originally shaped at Nicæa, has been long regarded as the "Creed of Constantinople." But that view is now abandoned by scholars for the following reasons: The creed omits strong anti-Arian expressions,[1] an omission that would be unaccountable at this council, since the council's *raison d'être* was to stiffen up orthodoxy against Arianism; it was in existence previous to the assembling of the council, since it was mentioned by Epiphanius at an earlier date; it is almost identical with the creed of Cyril of Jerusalem; for two hundred years after the council of Constantinople nobody is found connecting it with that council; we know that the council reaffirmed the Creed of Nicæa. Possibly Cyril —who was present—read his creed to the council and got an endorsement of it as a creed he might use in his own church, and if so this fact may have originated the legend.[2]

Meanwhile the one important conclusion of the council was simply the reassertion of the Nicene position, together with an explicit repudiation of whatever more recent schemes and speculations were deemed inconsistent with it. Some advance of thought may be seen in the three Cappadocians, especially in Gregory of Nyssa; and a very original attempt to break up new ground and carry theological ideas further forward in explanation of the incarnation is to be acknowledged in Apollinaris. But the latter is denounced as a heretic, and even Basil and the Gregories have only been utilised in defence of the established position. Gregory of Nyssa, the most original thinker of the trio, comes to be regarded with some suspicion on account of his sympathy with Origen's universalism. The council thinks it can do nothing better

[1] τοῦτ' ἐστὶν ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ πατρὸς and θεὸν ἐκ θεοῦ.

[2] See Hort, *Two Dissertations.*

than fall back on the decision of "the 318," now fifty-six years old, and treated with growing veneration as an inspired oracle. That decision was to be the stamp and seal of orthodoxy for all time. There remained to do nothing more in the matter than to safeguard it against the attacks of heresy, which in the meantime had risen up to assail it on all sides. Already the keynote of Eastern Christianity was sounded. This was to be orthodoxy—fixed, settled dogma, with no encouragement for widening views or the exploration of new realms of truth.

Having determined this point, the council only had to proceed to certain practical decisions in its later canons. The object of one of these was to confine a bishop's authority to his own district. Another, the third, declared that "the bishop of Constantinople shall have the privilege of rank next after the bishop of Rome; because Constantinople is new Rome"[1]—a decision of great significance in view of the subsequent division of the Church.

[1] Τὸν μέν τοι Κωνσταντινουπόλεως ἐπίσκοπον ἔχειν τὰ πρεσβεῖα τῆς τιμῆς μετὰ τὸν τῆς Ῥώμης ἐπίσκοπον, διὰ τὸ εἶναι αὐτὴν νέαν Ῥώμην. Observe the preposition—μετά, and note the reason for the position—a wholly political reason, and therefore thoroughly characteristic of the Greek Church.

CHAPTER VI

THE MOVEMENTS THAT LED TO THE COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON (A.D. 382–445)

(*a*) The Church historians—Socrates (to A.D. 439), Sozomen (to A.D. 439); Theodoret (to A.D. 429), Evagrius (to A.D. 594). The pagan historian Zosimus (to A.D. 410). *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, "Chrysostom."

(*b*) Hefele, *History of the Councils*, Eng. Trans., vol. ii., 1876; Bright, *Age of the Fathers*, vol. ii., 1903; Stephens, *Life of Chrysostom*, 1872; Dorner, *Person of Christ*, Div. II. vol. i.; Ottley, *The Incarnation*, part vi., 1896; Loofs, *Nestoriana*.

WITH the tragic death of Valens and the accession of Gratian in the West and Theodosius in the East the long Arian tyranny comes to an end. Here then a new chapter opens in the history of the Eastern Church. Theodosius was more generous in conduct and more liberal in ideas than either his enemies have been willing to admit in the one case or his friends in the other. One frightful outbreak of his fiery Spanish temper has left an indelible stain on the emperor's memory in spite of the humble penance to which he afterwards submitted. Hearing of a riot at Thessalonica in which a general and other officers of the army had been killed by the populace, who were indignant at the punishment of a favourite charioteer, although this had been on account of a vile crime, Theodosius flew into a rage, ordered the citizens to be invited to the hippodrome as for an expected race, and set his soldiers on to an indiscriminate slaughter, which resulted in a massacre of 5000 men, women, and children. Ambrose, the bishop of Milan, after writing to the emperor to express his horror of the crime, though in courteous

terms, stood at the door of his church when Theodosius presented himself for the Christmas festival, and would not permit his entrance till some time after he had humbled himself and confessed his guilt. It was an unheard of act of daring. We may note that it took place in the independent West, not in the obsequious East, and further that it was the deed of one who had the most exalted idea of the duties of the episcopate, and who held a very high place in the estimation of his people. For all that, although the dramatic event is often quoted as an indication of the growing power of the Church in its age-long conflict with the empire, in so personal a case as this much must be set down to the character of the sovereign who could thus humble himself in owning his wrong-doing before a minister of religion, like David when accused by Nathan. It was very different from the Norman Henry II. doing penance at the shrine of Becket in superstitious terror and more practical alarm of insurrection.

In his ecclesiastical policy Theodosius ruthlessly expelled Arian bishops, treating them about as badly as his predecessor had treated the Nicene clergy. They would see that they were just paid in their own coin; and it was only what everybody expected. The emperor's measures against paganism have been misunderstood and their severity has been exaggerated. It is true that much happened during the reign of Theodosius to bring the tottering, crumbling fabric of the cult of the old gods to the ground. The failure of Julian's fanatical attempt at resuscitation combined with reformation was a plain proof that its days were over. It was like the case of Monasticism in the reign of Henry VIII.; the passing away of the anachronism was inevitable. From the days of Constantius laws against sacrificing had been inscribed in the statute book; but, except with reference to magic—which people dreaded, the demons being reckoned dangerous—and obscene ceremonies, against which the growing sense of decency in a Christian community revolted, these laws had not been executed. Theodosius put the already existing and acknowledged laws

in force. No statute of Theodosius ordered the destruction of temples—he was no vandal. The demolition went on merrily in some districts, but as the result of popular violence, which however found encouragement in the known fact of the emperor's activity in repressing pagan rites.

It was in this way that the destruction of the famous Serapeum at Alexandria was brought about, although Socrates states that "at the solicitation of Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria, the emperor issued an order at this time for the demolition of the heathen temples in that city; commanding also that it should be put in execution under the direction of Theophilus, which occasioned a great commotion."[1] First we see the temple of Mithra cleared out and its abhorrent contents exposed to view. That was not an instance of temple demolition; the building was not destroyed. But in the case of the Serapeum, inasmuch as the pagan party was using it as their fortress, a riotous attack was made on it by the mob led by the monks, the image of Serapis was hacked to pieces, and the temple itself pulled to the ground. This act of violence provoked a counter movement from the pagan section of the population, and the result was a street fight in which many lives were lost. Socrates states that most of the victims were Christians, it being found afterwards that very few heathen were killed. We may gather from this fact that the pagan element in the city was still strong—at least in its anti-Christian activity, although it did not show much energy in support of its own religious rites. Other temples in Egypt and elsewhere were destroyed, probably in similar popular tumults, and nobody was punished by the government. Still, Theodosius himself had wished the buildings to be preserved and used as government offices.

Theodosius did not confine the distribution of offices to Christians; he granted them to pagans when he saw merit. Thus he appointed Symmachus consul and the rhetorician Themistius prefect of Constantinople and even tutor to his

[1] *Hist. Eccl.* v. 16.

son Arcadius—although both of them were pagans. Altogether it may be concluded that, while he did not restrain the growing popular violence directed against the buildings and images of pagan worship, and even took action to suppress the ritual, he bore no grudge against persons and was quite ready to appreciate the good qualities of adherents of the old religions. The empire which had been united for a time was divided at his death (A.D. 395) between his two weak sons, Honorius in the West and Arcadius in the East. The latter was a puppet in the hands of his unscrupulous minister Eutropius, who induced him to marry a beautiful Frank maiden Eudoxia.

Meanwhile the one really great man in the Eastern Church was being brought into public notice as much by his stern fidelity as by his unparalleled pulpit gifts. This was John, first known as a presbyter at Antioch and always described by this simple name during his lifetime, but now recognised by his posthumous title, Chrysostom. Antioch was the seat of a school of Bible study, the method of which was very different from that cultivated at Alexandria. Following the example of the grammarians in their treatment of Homer and of Philo in his adaptation of the Old Testament to current philosophical ideas, the Alexandrian Christian scholars took great liberties with the Scriptures—the New Testament as well as the Old—in freely allegorising them. The scholars of Antioch, on the other hand, pursued the method of grammatical and historical interpretation. For this reason, while we are often amused at the ingenuity of the Alexandrian interpretations of the Bible, we find Antiochian expositions of permanent value as guides to a correct understanding of Scripture. No commentator is of more use in this respect than Chrysostom. He is the prince of expository preachers. The modern expositor is a debtor to the great presbyter of Antioch for many suggestive ideas which he thinks he owes to Westcott, Lightfoot, Alford, or Matthew Henry, but which if he had the patience to trace the stream up to its source he would see to have sprung from the sound perceptions of Chrysostom.

It must have been an age of Bible reading, at least in that chief centre of Bible study, Antioch; for Chrysostom assumes a knowledge of Scripture on the part of his hearers which few preachers of the present day would venture to take for granted in their congregations.

It was a crisis in the fate of his city that brought Chrysostom to the front as the greatest preacher of his age, perhaps of any age. There had been a riot, springing from popular irritation at the emperor's demand for a large contribution from Antioch towards a largesse for the army, in which the statues of the emperor and empress were destroyed. No sooner was this mad freak over than its perpetrators repented of their folly. In the despotic East the emperor and empress were flattered with almost divine honours and their statues treated with some approach to the veneration that the pagans professed for the images of their gods, that is to say, they were political idols, to insult which was more than treason, almost sacrilege. This was during the reign of Theodosius, whose hot temper and the ruthless vengeance he did not scruple to wreak on those who offended him were well known—though the incident was earlier than the massacre of Thessalonica. The reaction was appalling. The people were simply numb with horror. Then the old bishop Flavian set out on a journey across the mountains in the snows of winter to plead for his flock with the emperor, who could not but be justly offended. Happily, his mission was successful, and he was able to return with a pardon to be received by the city of Antioch on certain conditions that were not unreasonable. Meanwhile the people sat terror-stricken, awaiting the verdict on their crime and anticipating the worst. Then Chrysostom seized the opportunity to conduct a mission. Every day his church was thronged, while the preacher denounced the luxuries and lashed the vices of his fellow-citizens. Like Savonarola at Florence he daringly attacked popular sins, directly accusing the trembling people who stood spellbound under the scathing torrent of eloquence. The result was a revival of religion in the dissolute city.

In the year 397 the death of Nectarius, who had been patriarch of Constantinople for the previous sixteen years, left the most important post in the Eastern Church vacant. It shows the good sense of the imperial minister Eutropius, worthless man as he was, that this *de facto* ruler persuaded his master to assign the episcopate to Chrysostom. Then, focussed in the blaze of publicity at the imperial capital, the wonderful preacher more than justified the discernment which had led to his appointment. The influence which he exerted from the cathedral pulpit excelled that of the court. Short in stature, unsociable in manners, living the life of a recluse in the patriarch's lordly palace, and so disappointing those who had enjoyed the princely hospitality of his predecessor, Chrysostom swayed the people of Constantinople as he chose, by the magic of his eloquence. Yet he was no flatterer of common habits and notions. He proved how the supremely great preacher can win the confidence of his congregation without ever stooping to the arts of popularity. Chrysostom was a John the Baptist in his stern denunciation of prevalent evils among all circles of society up to the very highest. He even anticipated the rude daring of John Knox in comparing the empress to Jezebel—and that at Constantinople, the city of subservient prelates. At the same time he was both just and generous, and it was his large-hearted sense of fairness that led to his first troubles in the city. The occasion was the attack on the teachings of Origen that was then being promoted by the narrower-minded monks.

The story is complicated. The most vehement opponents of Origenism were too ignorant to understand the teaching they decried. These men who came from the desert cells of Egypt were known as Anthropomorphists from their grossly materialistic conception of God as possessing a human body with physical features like our own, so that the Scripture references to His eyes, ears, hands, and feet were to be taken literally. When one of these simple souls was shown the error of such a notion, he exclaimed with tears, "They have taken away my

Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." How could such people understand the profound ideas of the philosophic Origen? Unfortunately they regarded the spirit of Origen as the chief opponent of their own views, and it was in self-defence that they promoted the anti-Origen agitation. The movement swelled to dangerous dimensions, till Theophilus, the patriarch of Alexandria, who at first had opposed it, swung round, from fear or policy, and threw the ægis of his protection over it. Meanwhile the more spiritual monks were strongly opposed to this literalism, and the opposition was led by four old men in the Nitrian desert who were known as the "tall brothers" from their remarkable stature. Theophilus attacked these men, and they fled to Palestine and ultimately to Constantinople, where they sought the intercession of Chrysostom. The large-hearted patriarch would not undertake to judge the case; but he wrote to Theophilus begging the Alexandrian patriarch to receive the old men back. This brought into the field the ever-recurring jealousy between Alexandria and the upstart imperial city of Constantinople. Theophilus charged Chrysostom with interfering with a matter that was not within his jurisdiction. Then the emperor was persuaded to summon Theophilus to Constantinople. He came, but at his own pace and gathering adherents on the road, so that when he presented himself he was strong enough to hold a council in a suburb of Chalcedon called "the Oak," at which Chrysostom was condemned and deposed on the ground of a number of frivolous charges. But the rage of the people and an earthquake which alarmed Eudoxia, who took it for a supernatural portent, led the empress to persuade her husband to recall the patriarch. He was received back with wild joy, led into his church by his people, and compelled to preach to them there and then. This uncanonical act of resuming his ministerial office after deposition was made a ground of accusation against Chrysostom when he was again out of favour with the court. It was like the charge against Athanasius when

he returned to Alexandria on the invitation of the civil government after deposition by a Church council at Tyre. But in both cases the defence was really unanswerable. The condemning synods were not fairly representative, and they had no jurisdiction over the bishops they presumed to depose.

Chrysostom's second offence was final. A silver image of Eudoxia had been set up opposite his church and the inauguration of it was celebrated with dances and buffoonery, which the patriarch detested as morally pernicious. He vehemently denounced the whole of the proceedings, an action which of course mortally offended the empress. There is extant a sermon attributed to Chrysostom on this occasion, beginning with the sentence, "Again Herodias is raging, again she is excited, again she is dancing, again she is seeking to obtain the head of John." The sermon as it stands is spurious, and Gibbon thought that this celebrated sentence in particular was certainly an invention; but the preacher who could call a woman "Jezebel" on one occasion might be imagined when more provoked on a later occasion to have designated her "Herodias." At all events, Chrysostom's offence was unpardonable. For a time he remained in seclusion at Constantinople, twice escaping assassination, while the city was in a great state of commotion. Then he was banished, a synod condemning him for having resumed his office without ecclesiastical permission since the synod of the Oak had deposed him. After three years of exile the hardships he had endured hastened his death (Sept. 14, 407).

Passing on now to the Christological controversies which followed the formal settlement of the Arian disputes at the council of Constantinople, we notice two opposite tendencies of thought, each of which had to be guarded against by those who would keep to the ever sharpening knife-edge of ecclesiastical orthodoxy. The Church having reaffirmed the primary facts of the perfect Divinity and

the true humanity of Christ, the next question was as to how the two elements could co-exist in one and the same Person. Thus the discussion moved from the question of the Trinity, which had occupied the thoughts of theologians of the fourth century, to the consideration of the nature of Christ, which was to engage the minds of disputants during the fifth century, and beyond into the sixth and even the seventh. The controversies became more and more hard and narrow, unspiritual and purely polemical, as the weary process went on, till the Church woke up with a rude shock in the advent of Mohammedanism, to face the vital question whether Christianity was to continue to exist at all—in any form, orthodox or heterodox. The two heresies which rent the Eastern Church during the fifth century scarcely touched the West, although the bishop of Rome intervened from time to time to help towards a settlement. Therefore they belong essentially to the Oriental branch of Church history. Moreover, their effects are seen in the divisions of Eastern Christendom in the present day, one of them being represented by the Nestorians of the Euphrates and India, the other by the Syrian Jacobites and the Copts in Egypt. In the controversies of the fifth century we see the rise of both the movements which have perpetuated themselves in these two groups of Christians out of communion with the Greek Church, both of them denounced by "the holy orthodox Church" as heretical.

We saw how the Christological speculations began to appear even during the course of the fourth century in those two very original thinkers, Apollinaris and Gregory of Nyssa.[1] The former had been condemned by the council of Constantinople for denying the full humanity of Christ; and the latter had come to be looked on with suspicion on account of his sympathies with the ideas of Origen. After this, whatever new lines of thought are followed had to come within those laid down in the Nicene and Constantinopolitan settlement. Still, within the limits thus decided there was room for considerable variety of

[1] P. 79.

opinions. These turned in one or other of two directions according as the mind was directed to the distinction of the natures in Christ or to the unity of the Person. Emphasis on the distinction between the Divine and human natures in our Lord issued in Nestorianism. Insistence on the unity of His person pushed to an extreme led to the heresy known at the time as Eutychianism. In point of fact, however, another and a deeper tendency may be traced through each of these movements when we consider the motives that inspired them. The underlying motive of Nestorianism was interest in our Lord's humanity, His earthly life, His brotherly relations with mankind; the motive prompting to Eutychianism was the aim of exalting the Divinity of Christ in which the human nature was quite swallowed up and assimilated to the infinite, all-controlling Divine. Nestorianism took its origin in the school of Antioch, where the Gospels were studied historically and the earthly life of Jesus Christ highly valued. Antioch was in close touch with Constantinople, and thus the influence of the Syrian city was readily felt in the great metropolis. The opposition to Nestorianism—which ultimately came over the fine edge of orthodoxy on the other side, in the form of Eutychianism—sprang from Alexandria, the home of Athanasius a century before, famed as the stronghold of the doctrine of the Divinity of Christ. But immediately we name these cities we are prepared to see how the age-long jealousies of the patriarchates of which they were the seats were roused to range themselves on one side or the other of the discussions, which thus obtained local colour and excited partisan passions quite irrespective of the claims of truth or the honour of Him about whose nature the rival disputants professed to be so deeply concerned.

The originator of the Nestorian line of thought was Theodore of Mopsuestia, and his mind was set going in this direction in opposition to the Apollinarians. He urged that for the restoration of the shattered unity of the cosmos it was necessary that God the Word should become

a perfect man. Theodore developed his ideas of the moral perfection of Jesus as a man, resting this partly on the Virgin birth and the baptism, and partly on His union with the Divine Word.[1] He held that there was an indwelling of God in Christ, generically the same as in the saints, but specifically different. "I am not so mad," he says, "as to affirm that the indwelling of God in Christ is after the same manner as in the saints. He dwelt in Christ as in a son."[2] It will be seen that such language finds the actual personality of Christ in His human nature, however closely and in however unique a way the Divine may be united to it. Thus the tendency of thought will be towards a separation into two persons—the Divine Person of the *Logos* and the human Person Jesus. That will not be so far from Paul of Samosata's idea of the God-influenced man, except that as regards the Divine, the *Logos*, the Trinitarian conception is preserved.

Theodore's views were introduced to Constantinople by Nestorius, who was appointed patriarch in the year 428, like Chrysostom after having been a presbyter at Antioch. He was blameless in personal character, and he had gained some reputation by his fluent, sonorous eloquence. And yet he commenced with a false step, for in his first sermon, addressing the emperor, he exclaimed, "Give me the earth cleared of heretics, and I will give you the kingdom of heaven in exchange; aid me in subduing the heretics, and I will aid you in vanquishing the Persians."[3] Such an untimely boast of bigotry disgusted sober minds, and Nestorius came to be branded as an "incendiary" in consequence. Not long after this the heresy-hunter was denounced as a heretic—a just retribution of which history furnishes many instances.[4] The trouble began with the sermon of a presbyter Anastasius, who had accompanied Nestorius from Antioch and shared with his bishop the ideas of Theodore, in which the preacher attacked the

[1] *De Incarn.* [2] ὡς ἐν υἱῷ. [3] Socrates, vii. 29.

[4] It will be recollected that Arius began by denouncing the heretical teaching of Alexander his bishop.

title *Theotokos* ("Bearer" or "mother of God") as applied to the Virgin Mary. The term had long been in use, and it had the sanction of Athanasius and other trusted Fathers. Nevertheless Nestorius defended his friend and adopted the same position with reference to the title. The famous Cyril, a man of intense, fierce determination, now patriarch of Alexandria, took up the case against Nestorius. His record was not unblemished. Even if he had taken no part in the outrageous murder of the beautiful, learned, and refined Neo-Platonist lecturer Hypathia, when the monks seized her in the street, dragged her from her carriage, tore off her clothes, scraped the flesh from her bones with oyster shells, and flung her mangled remains on a fire, the cruel patriarch cannot be exculpated from acquiescence in the awful crime.[1] Such was the self-appointed champion of the faith in opposition to the "blasphemer" Nestorius. The pope Celestius held a council at Rome (430), which condemned Nestorius. Cyril was to execute the sentence of deposition, but Nestorius took no notice of it.

The quarrel became so serious that the emperor Theodosius II. summoned a council which met at Ephesus the next year (431), and is known as the *Third General Council.* Cyril and his party arrived before the friends of Nestorius from Antioch with John the patriarch of the church in that city at their head. It was assumed that he had purposely delayed. Anyhow, Cyril's haste in procuring the condemnation of Nestorius before the council was complete, and in the absence of the defenders of the accused, was scarcely decent and certainly not fair. Naturally enough Nestorius declined to appear before so one-sided a tribunal. When John arrived he and his bishops replied by voting the deposition of Cyril. Neither decision was effective at the moment. Nestorius relied on the protection of the emperor; but this did not long save him. Theodosius yielded to the powerful court intrigues that were brought to bear upon him—for unlike his grandfather he had more piety than power—and Nestorius

[1] Socrates, vii. 15; Philostorgius, viii. 9.

was banished first to Petra in Arabia and then to the oasis of Ptolemais in Egypt. After being captured by Arab brigands and suffering many other hardships for which the orthodox authorities showed no pity, he died from the effects of ill-usage in the year 439. Meanwhile his followers were hounded out of the empire, being driven over into Persia. And yet the influence of Theodore and Nestorius lived on, chiefly owing to the hold it got on the important school of theological scholarship at Edessa.

The opposite tendency of thought which ripened into Eutychianism was just the emphasising and perhaps carrying further forward of the ideas of Cyril. Although this notorious Alexandrian dogmatist has been canonised and although his writings are now prized among the most highly honoured works of the Fathers, it is not easy to distinguish his position from that of the heresy that came under condemnation at the next general council. He held that Nestorianism involved a duality of persons in Christ—the human Jesus being one person, the Divine *Logos* another. And yet he was not content to assert a unity of persons; he maintained that there was a unity of nature.[1] Nor would he allow of any real *kenosis* in the incarnation. While Jesus lay in the cradle, to all appearance a helpless infant, He was actually administering the affairs of the universe. When as a man He appeared to be ignorant of anything, this was only in appearance. Even when He said He did not know the day or hour of the Parousia, that only meant that He had no knowledge for the disciples which he could communicate to them.

But it was the pronounced expression of such views, carried perhaps a little further by Eutyches, the archimandrite of a large monastery near Constantinople, that drew

[1] ἕνωσις τῶν προσώπων will not suffice; there must be ἕνωσις καθ' ὑπόστασιν. This was quite in accordance with the idea of ὑπόστασις in the Cappadocian theologians, so that there is nothing peculiar to Cyril so far as Dorner seems to imply (*Person of Christ*, Eng. Trans., Div. II. vol. i. p. 57). But Cyril goes further and has the expression μία φύσις (*Ep. ad Acac.* p. 115, quoted by Dorner, *op. cit.*), verbally at any rate an anticipation of Monophysitism, also ἑνότης φυσική, *Ep. ad monarchas Aeg.* p. 9.

down on them the disapproval of a lynx-eyed orthodoxy. Eutyches was an obstinate, narrow-minded old man who had spent several years in retirement when he came forward to contest the error of Nestorianism. He did this so extravagantly that to his amazement he found himself charged with heresy in an opposite direction. He maintained that the two natures in Christ were fused together in the incarnation, so that there became "one incarnate nature of God the Word." His opinions were condemned at a local synod; but Eutyches would not submit and demanded a general council, which was convened at Ephesus by Theodosius II. and met in August 449. It was grossly packed by the friends of Eutyches. Those bishops who had taken part in the condemnation of the archimandrite at Constantinople, as well as others coming from the East, and therefore suspected of Nestorianism, were not allowed to vote. All reporters except those of the Eutychian party were expelled. If any one who had taken part in the obnoxious Constantinople synod ventured to open his mouth in favour of "two natures," he was immediately shouted down with cries of "Nestorian!" "Tear him asunder!" "Burn him alive!" "As he divides, so let him be divided!" The orthodoxy of Eutyches was vindicated, and an anathema was pronounced against Nestorius amid shouts—"Drive out, burn, tear, cut asunder, massacre all who hold two natures!" Dioscurus, Cyril's successor at Alexandria, was not satisfied with a mere discussion and its vote. "Call in the counts," he shouted. Thereupon the proconsul of Asia entered, attended by soldiers and monks armed with swords and clubs and carrying chains. The panic-stricken bishops tried to hide under the benches, in dark corners of the church, wherever they could creep out of sight. But they were dragged forth, threatened, even struck, and ultimately forced to sign the condemnation of Flavian, the patriarch of Constantinople, who was leading the opposite party.

It is said that Dioscurus, Cyril's successor, the patriarch of Alexandria, struck Flavian in the face, kicked him,

stamped on him. Be that as it may, Flavian died a few days later from the ill-treatment he had received at the council. The emperor confirmed the decisions of this disreputable council. But Leo I., bishop of Rome, the first of the great popes, repudiated it as invalid and sternly denounced its proceedings, designating it *Latrocinialis* — the "Robber Council."[1]

The Eastern Church was now miserably divided. Egypt, Thrace, and Palestine held to the Eutychian side, while Syria, Pontus, and Asia supported the opposite position, which Flavian had championed, but which was now maintained by the most powerful man of his age, the great Leo. The next year (A.D. 450) Theodosius II. died through a fall from his horse. His sister, Pulcheria, was already exercising great power in the State, and she now married a senator Marcian, sixty years of age, who thus becoming emperor, at once reversed the policy of his predecessor and entered into communication with Leo for the settlement of the troubled state of the Church. An indirect proof of what this condition was may be gathered from the fact that the following year Marcian issued a law against brawling in church and forbidding meetings in private houses or in the street. The same year he banished Eutyches. The result of the emperor's correspondence with the pope was that Marcian summoned a general council which was to have met at Nicæa, the now venerated site of orthodoxy. Subsequently, to suit the convenience of the emperor, the place of assembly was changed to Chalcedon on the Bosphorus, as that was near Constantinople.

The council of Chalcedon is the last of the four general councils recognised both by the Churches of the West—Protestant (*i.e.* Lutheran and Anglican) as well as Roman Catholic—and by the main body of the Eastern Church. It met in the church of St. Euphemia, holding its first session on 8th October, A.D. 451. There were some five or six hundred bishops present, most of them from the

[1] Leo, *Epis.* 95, in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. xii. p. 71.

Oriental provinces of the empire. Thus this council, like each of its three predecessors—at Nicæa, Constantinople, and Ephesus—was not only held in the East, but was also almost entirely Oriental in composition. Leo was very desirous to have the council at Rome. But that was not to be. All the councils were summoned by emperors, and it was in the East that the imperial government held supreme sway over the Church. No emperor with any concern for his authority could have consented to the assembly of a general council of the Church at Rome, especially under so important a person as Leo I., who was really much more influential in the West than Marcian himself. Leo was not present; but he exerted a weighty influence on the proceedings of the council. The papal delegates insisted that Dioscurus should not be allowed to sit as a judge in a case where his own conduct was on trial. He was condemned, and deposed, and subsequently banished to Gangra in Paphlagonia, where he died three years later (A.D. 454). Although this was on the ground of his own conduct at Ephesus and his having dared to excommunicate "the most holy and most blessed archbishop of Rome," the heresy he had defended was condemned. Having first confirmed the decrees of the three earlier councils, the council of Chalcedon anathematised Nestorianism on the one hand, and Eutychianism on the other. Leo's "Tome," an important doctrinal statement contained in a letter which the pope had addressed to Flavian, was adopted as the standard statement of orthodoxy; and to this was added a minutely discriminating definition of doctrine. The "Tome" is an admirably balanced statement of the Church's position with regard to the unity of the Person and the distinction of the two natures in Christ, and the formula of Chalcedon which accepts and confirms this statement carefully recapitulates the ideas contained therein. It is to be observed that neither document attempts any explanation of the incarnation, nor does either really attempt to resolve the apparent paradox propounded by its definitions. Each is content to define the orthodox position, clearly, unmistak-

ably, finally. In these two documents we have the Church's authoritative declaration of the incarnation. The settlement of Chalcedon declares that, "We, therefore, following the Holy Fathers, confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ; and we do with one voice teach, that He is perfect in Godhead and that He is perfect in Manhood, being truly God and truly Man; that He is of a reasonable soul and body, consubstantial with the Father as touching His Godhead, and consubstantial with us as touching His Manhood . . . acknowledged to be in two natures without confusion, change, division, separation,"—and more to the same purport. This then is the final orthodoxy, to defend which has been the main business of the theologians of the Greek Church for all subsequent ages. Those who want more than statement and defence; those who desire metaphysical explanation, must look elsewhere than to the orthodox confession of the Eastern theologians.

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CHAPTER VII

THE MONOPHYSITE TROUBLES

(*a*) Evagrius; Nicephorus; Procopius; Theodore the Reader, fragments (to A.D. 518). Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum . . . collectio*, vii.

(*b*) Dorner, *Person of Christ*, Eng. Trans., Div. II. i., 1861; Hefele, *Hist. of Councils*, Eng. Trans., vol. iii., 1883; vol. iv., 1895; Ottley, *Incarnation*, part vii., 1896.

THE sequel to the council of Chalcedon was more like the sequel to the council of Nicæa than the history consequent to the council of Constantinople. That second general council which condemned Arianism did really seem to be successful, for after it we hear much less of the heresy within the borders of the empire; but then, as we have observed, it was already breaking up in consequence of internal divisions. On the other hand, the fourth general council, like the venerated first council, was quite unable to suppress the heresies it was especially summoned to condemn. Nestorianism was only banished; in exile it spread and flourished among the Persian Christians, and farther east Eutychianism, slightly modified, went on within the empire under the new title of Monophysitism. By dropping the obnoxious name of its founder, who was sacrificed as a victim to the passion for orthodoxy, and adopting a descriptive title, it was better able to emphasise its central idea and at the same time spread its influence within the Church, although its adherents, being out of sympathy with the dominant party, stood aloof and gradually crystallised into a sect. There was some softening of the extreme views that had been put forth by the old

monk Eutyches, a man of no breadth of mind or depth of insight. The Monophysites were more refined and metaphysical in their thinking. While they insisted on the oneness of our Lord's nature in opposition to the Chalcedonian dogma of the continuance of two natures in the one person, they were willing to admit that He came to be the incarnate Christ by the union, the fusing together, of two natures. Thus they would allow that He was "*of* two natures,"[1] though they denied that He existed "*in* two natures";[2] and while with Eutyches the human nature was so absorbed that it virtually vanished, according to the Monophysites Christ had a composite nature.[3] Moreover, they admitted the continuance of the two sets of attributes—the human and the Divine—although only as qualities of one substance. The union of the natures, however, could not be justly compared to a mere amalgam for two reasons. In the first place, each nature underwent change, the human taking on Divine properties and the Divine taking on human characteristics. There was this difference, that change in the Divine nature was only "by grace," an effect of an act of will done for the sake of the redemption of the world, while full freedom remained to abstain from it. There was no *kenosis*, no actual self-emptying, but only a condescending to the forms and modes of a human life, while the Divine remained in essence unchanged. Then, in the second place, the Divine nature so completely dominated the human element that, except in the outward appearance of a man's form and an earthly life, this human element really counted for nothing. We might state it thus. The fractional existence of the human nature being a finite numerator with an infinite denominator, it was really equivalent to zero. If f stands for a finite and ∞ for infinity we might express the doctrine by the formula $\frac{f}{\infty} = 0$.

When we endeavour to trace out the course of the

[1] ἐκ δύο φύσεων. [2] ἐν δύο φύσεσιν.
[3] Called μία φύσις σύνθετος.

dreary Monophysite controversy which circled round this position we do not see on the surface of it sufficient cause for all the heat it developed, all the dust it raised. Here was a fine point of theology, so difficult to determine that only an expert could state it correctly, and yet it divided cities into furious factions with howling mobs and fatal riots. It is not enough to lay down the cynical principle that the heat of a controversy varies directly with the smallness of the difference between the contending parties—although there are not wanting instances apparently confirming it—as in the quarrel between the "Old Lights" and the "New Lights" among the Presbyterians of Scotland. The long-drawn Monophysite controversy threatened the disintegration of the Church and endangered the peace of the empire; in fact it did actually effect the disintegration of the Church by breaking off huge fragments that have remained down to the present day in separation from the Greek communion, which arrogates to itself the title of orthodox. Surely there must be some sufficient cause for so obstinate a schism.

Among men earnest in their religious faith no doubt the charm of the Monophysite doctrine was found in the honour it appeared to give to Christ. This view was most vehemently maintained by the monks of the Egyptian deserts, men who were at once grossly ignorant and passionately in earnest, of the stuff that fanatics are made of, prototypes and in part ancestors of the modern dervishes. The immediate motive of the movement into which these half savage monks threw themselves with such fiery enthusiasm was antagonism to Nestorianism. It was represented to them by Dioscurus that the council of Chalcedon favoured that heresy—which had been condemned at the council of Ephesus; it was even rumoured that Nestorius had been invited to Chalcedon and had only been prevented from attending by his timely death on the way thither. Then the Nestorians were regarded with horror as men who divided Christ into two persons, who really denied the incarnation, and who were virtually

Unitarians. To oppose this dishonouring error the Monophysite presented himself as the champion of the perfect Divinity of Christ. Moreover, the popularity of the term *Theotokos*, the watchword of anti-Nestorianism, tended in the same direction. With this, and powerfully aided by it, came the growing cult of the Virgin, especially welcome in Egypt, the original home of the Mother-god Isis. The visitor to Cairo will see displayed in shops of antiquities statuettes of Isis with Horus in her arms, found in ancient Egyptian tombs, which are almost perfect counterparts of Christian statuettes of the Virgin and child. There came gradually into use such phrases as "God was born"; "God died." The whole tendency of thought in the Church was moving in this direction. It was rather hard on the Monophysites that they were excommunicated as heretics, since generation after generation of the orthodox was moving nearer and nearer to their position during the course of the succeeding centuries. In fact, all through the later patristic period and down into the Middle Ages the humanity of Christ became more and more shadowy, and His Divinity increasingly dominated the minds of the Church teachers, so that sorrowful people who were craving for human sympathy turned from the awful Byzantine Christ to the compassionate Mary, and found in the mother that actual human sympathy which it had been the object of the now neglected incarnation to bring them in her Son. It is hardly too much to say that Mary became to all intents and purposes the incarnate Saviour, while the humanity of Christ and His incarnation were lost in the grandeur of His Divinity.

But while these religious and doctrinal tendencies were influencing serious minds, the disgraceful history of the dispute shows that personal pique, party passion, political intrigue, jealousy, and ambition only too often swept all before them, impelling men to the clash of collision with little or no genuine appreciation of the merits of the cause they were defending. We must go further afield, beyond the Church and the cell, to the decaying society of

the empire in the throes of dissolution, for an explanation of the abominations that now accompanied the theological quarrels of monks and clergy. The squat, savage Huns from the East—the yellow peril of the empire, and the rough, vigorous Teutons from the North—its real salvation, were now pouring over the rich fields of southern and western Europe. At the same time the helplessness of the legionaries, due to their numerical impoverishment in the dwindling population of the provinces, that was waiting for the fresh blood of a new healthy stock, had left the cities a prey to the worst elements of society. In some respects Alexandria and Antioch, and occasionally even Constantinople, were now like Paris at the time of the Revolution. Men came to the front who in more settled times would never have been heard of; inhuman deeds were done which revealed the conscious corruption of an old civilisation as more cruel, more foul, more bestial than the unabashed habitude of primitive barbarism.

The Emperor Marcian had forcibly upheld the decisions of the council of Chalcedon by forbidding the Eutychians to hold meetings, to ordain clergy, or to build churches or monasteries. But to silence an obnoxious party is not to convert it. The death of the emperor, in January 457, was the signal for an outbreak of violence by the followers of Dioscurus against his successor Proterius and the orthodox Alexandrians. Timothy, nicknamed *Ælurus*—"the Cat"—one of the presbyters of Dioscurus, who had been deposed and banished to Lybia, now returned secretly to Alexandria, and crept about at night, *cat-like*, visiting the cells of ignorant monks. On being asked who he was, he would answer, "I am an angel sent to warn you to break off communion with Proterius, and to choose Timothy as bishop."[1] Unfortunately Proterius had behaved like a tyrant, and had only held his position by the aid of a guard of 2,000 soldiers, so that Timothy had no difficulty in gathering a following from the indignant populace as well as from the monks. Towards the end of Lent, with the support of these

[1] Theodore the Reader, i. 1; see Gibbon, chap. xlii.

adherents, he seized the great "Cæsarean" church, and was there consecrated by two bishops whom Proterius and his synod had deposed. Meanwhile the patriarch was sitting in his palace with his clergy. A few days later Timothy was expelled from the city by the civil authorities. This enraged the mob, who rose in riot on Easter Tuesday, hunted Proterius into his baptistery, and there murdered him. After hanging up his body for a time, they dragged it through the streets and then hacked it to pieces. Some of them, reduced to the level of the lowest savages, devoured the entrails. The remains were burnt and the ashes scattered to the winds.[1] The clergy of the orthodox party were now expelled from their churches and their places filled by men whom Timothy appointed. Fourteen of the deposed bishops, who had been driven, as they said in their account of these proceedings, to "a life more full of fear than that of hares or frogs," travelled to Constantinople to lay their complaint before the new emperor, Leo I.[2] Timothy also sent a deputation to represent his side of the case. Unwilling to bear the onus of a decision, Leo consulted the bishops of the various provinces, all of whom but one, Amphilochius of Side, condemned Timothy, and, with the exception of Amphilochius of Side, also accepted the council of Chalcedon.[3] Timothy was described as "a tyrant and a man of blood," "a homicide, a slayer of his father," one who "became not a shepherd of Christ's sheep, but an intolerable wolf," and more to the same effect, though some added the qualifying clause, "if the statements of the exiles were true."[4]

The subsequent career of this unscrupulous schemer is highly significant. In spite of the condemnation by the bishops, and although the pope wrote to the emperor urging the deposition of such a character, the influence of his friends at court delayed this action on the part of the government for two years. Even then Timothy

[1] This is stated in the letter of the Egyptian bishops to Anatolius of Constantinople, Mansi, vii. 533.

[2] Mansi, vii. 536. [3] Evagrius, ii. 10. [4] Mansi, vii. 537 ff.

obtained permission to come to Constantinople and plead his cause, on the cool assumption that the only objection to him was his heresy; but though he was restored for a time he was soon after again removed from Alexandria. Some years later, when Constantinople was in the hands of the usurper Basiliscus, Timothy was summoned to the capital and welcomed by his admirers with the acclamation, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Reinstated in his position at Alexandria, the outrageous hypocrite took credit to himself for his gentle treatment of Timothy Salofaciolus, who had held the patriarchate for sixteen years, and now had to make way for the returned exile. When his flatterers cried, "Thou hast fed thine enemies, pope," he accepted the compliment, exclaiming, "Yes, indeed I have fed them."

We may be sure that Timothy Ælurus had good reason for acting so mildly. He could see how popular his rival had become. A man of a gracious, pacific disposition, Timothy Salofaciolus had been rebuked by the Emperor Zeno for not exercising discipline more severely. He was so universally appreciated that even Monophysites would stop him in the streets to express their personal respect for him and their regret at being compelled to stand aloof from his communion. It is pleasant to meet with such a character amidst the narrow-minded partisans and fiery polemical theologians of the age. We need not conclude that he was a wholly exceptional character. Those were times of war, when fighting men came to the front. But meanwhile no doubt many a country pastor was quietly at work on his labour of love among the members of his simple flock, and a host of good men and women were endeavouring to walk in the footsteps of their Master, although history has preserved no records of their unexciting lives. The emergency into publicity of such a man as this amiable patriarch of Alexandria lifts for a moment the veil that hides the better side of the life of the Church. Ecclesiastical history is mainly the story of important

bishops. A picture of the Christian life of their times might surprise us with its much brighter colours. Although subsequently an attempt was made to again remove Ælurus, it was frustrated on the plea of his old age, and he was allowed to remain patriarch of Alexandria till his death.

Now the significance of this extraordinary story lies in the fact that, although the conscience of Christendom must have revolted against the enormity of his crime, and although his subtle, intriguing ways proved him to be a cunning schemer as well as a man of violence, Timothy had a powerful following throughout his career, and was permitted to end his days at one of the highest posts of honour in the odour of sanctity. The indignant protest of the bishops voiced the wholesome horror which we should expect all right-minded people to feel at such deeds as he had committed. Yet it only came from the orthodox party, that is to say, from his enemies. His friends the Monophysites were ready to profit by his wickedness and even to condone it for the sake of their cause. The only approach to an excuse for them is that they had a cause which they believed to be right and true, that therefore they were not merely place-hunters. But in view of the development of theological rancour and partizan passion which such a state of affairs reveals, this very excuse is a plain proof how entirely the degenerate monks and their adherents in the mob had substituted metaphysical accuracy as their test of true religion for the old sound idea of the prophet: "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

Next to Timothy Ælurus the most conspicuous leader of the Monophysites at this time was Peter the Fuller (A.D. 465–474), the patriarch of Antioch. It is difficult to piece together the several accounts of his early life,[1] but according to the arrangement of the data worked out by Tillemont, he first appears as a monk in Bythinia. Expelled

[1] In Acacius of Constantinople, Theodore the Reader, and Alexander a monk of Cyprus.

from his monastery for heresy and misconduct, he goes to Constantinople and worms his way into the confidence of Zeno, the future emperor. His true character being discovered here also he is obliged to move again, and going east in the train of Zeno he comes to Antioch, where he wins the ear of the populace, especially those who are still in sympathy with Apollinarianism, persuading these people that the patriarch Martyrius is a secret Nestorian. The result is a public tumult resulting in the expulsion of Martyrius and the election of Peter to his place.[1] In all these historical studies it is a wholesome caution, due as much to justice as to charity, to be slow to admit accusations against the moral character of heretics brought forward by their opponents. For us the significant fact is that a Monophysite secured the patriarchate of Antioch. Thus for the moment the rival sees are both in possession of representatives of the Alexandrian doctrine. Peter is especially notorious for having supplied to the Trisagion the phrase, "Who was crucified for us."[2] He formulates the liturgical sentence, "Holy God, holy Strong One, holy Immortal One, who for our sakes was crucified, have mercy on us." This gave rise to what has been known as the "Theopassian controversy." Thus, as Dorner justly remarks, "Patripassianism had, consequently, returned in an exaggerated Trinitarian form."[3]

The affairs of the Church in the East now became more and more mixed up with those of the empire. Leo I. died in the year 474, and was nominally succeeded by his daughter Ariadne's young son Leo II., who died within a twelvemonth, when Ariadne's husband Zeno became emperor. He was a rude Isaurian, a native of the mountainous region north of the Taurus range, and he used the opportunities of a court to plunge into the most outrageous debauchery. It was not difficult for the one strong person in Constantinople, the late Emperor Leo I.'s widow, to raise a revolt in favour of her brother Basiliscus, before which

[1] Tillemont, *Emp.* vi. p. 404 ff.

[2] ὁ σταυρωθεὶς δι ἡμᾶς.

[3] *Person of Christ*, Div. II. vol. i. p. 125.

Zeno fled to his old home beyond the mountains. Basiliscus leaned on the support of the Monophysites, and even dared to issue a circular letter condemning the council of Chalcedon—the first instance of an emperor on his own authority presuming to reverse the decision of a general council. It carries the State's interference with the Church a stage further.

Acacius the patriarch of Constantinople stoutly resisted this imperial favouring of Monophysitism; he draped the cathedral and the clergy in black in sign of mourning for the calamity that had come on the Church. Daniel, the greatest of the Stylites then living, came down from his pillar, entered the city, and preached to the awestruck populace. Crowds assembled at the gates of the cathedral in protest against the doings of the emperor. Meanwhile the reign of Basiliscus had been disgraced by disorderly and violent scenes in the court. Thus another revolt was provoked which issued in the deposition of the usurper and the return of Zeno to power. This man was the very last person who should have ventured to interfere with the creed of the Church. What could an ignorant debauchee know of such abstract mysteries as it involved? in what spirit could such a man handle them? The very idea of such a thing is shocking to the Christian conscience. But Zeno was a weak creature who lent himself as a tool for abler hands. It is an ominous sign of the settled subservience of the Church to the State, that a great ecclesiastic should have condescended to make use of so unclean an instrument. Nothing could more forcibly demonstrate the immense contrast between the condition of the Church in the East and its condition in the West than a comparison of the policy of Acacius the patriarch of Constantinople with Leo of Rome who had died but a few years earlier (A.D. 461). Soon after the Roman pontiff had proved himself the most powerful personage in the West, saving the empire, saving civilisation, by his courage, energy, and ability, his brother in the Eastern capital was to be seen cringing before the throne of a low, semi-barbarous sensualist in

order to obtain imperial influence in favour of his Church policy.[1] The result of Acacius's adroit manipulation of the emperor was the issue of the famous document known as Zeno's *Henoticon* (A.D. 482).

This document, which aimed at bringing the divided Church into unity, sought peace by means of vagueness. It was destined from the first to fail, although it was well meant by Acacius whom we should probably regard as its author. While re-affirming the decrees of Nicæa and Constantinople, it asserts that our Lord Jesus Christ is "Himself God incarnate, consubstantial with the Father according to His Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to His manhood . . . was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, mother of God"; and that He is "one Son, not two." Further, it condemns those "who divide or confound the natures," or admit only a fantastical incarnation, and it anathematises all who do or think "anything to the contrary, either now or at any other time, either at Chalcedon or in any other synod," especially Nestorius and Eutyches and their followers.[2] The very different manner of referring to the councils of Nicæa and Constantinople, on the one hand, and Chalcedon, on the other, is highly significant. The *Henoticon* was formally addressed to the bishops and clergy, monks and people, of Egypt and the Lybian district, but really only intended for the benefit of the Monophysites in order to reconcile them to union with the Church.[3] They could accept it without abandoning their specific tenets, while the orthodox could admit it while still holding to Leo's Tome and the Chalcedon decision. Some may think this a reasonable compromise on so difficult and abstruse a question. But no one who understood the temper of its age could have hoped much from it. It failed to accomplish its immediate purpose

[1] Robertson, however, justly remarks that "it must be remembered that the subsequent quarrel of Acacius with Rome has exposed him to hard treatment by writers in the Roman interest" (*Hist. of Christian Church*, vol. ii. p. 275).

[2] Evagrius, iii. 14.

[3] So Tillemont points out, *Mem. Eccles.* xvi. 327.

of uniting the Monophysites and the "orthodox" party of Chalcedon.

At Alexandria the Monophysite patriarch Peter Mongus signed, and he was allowed to retain his bishopric on condition that he received the Catholics to his communion. But the result of this concession on his part was that his own party broke off from him and remained in stiff separation from the main body of the Church under the title of the *Acephali*—"the Headless." So little or nothing was gained in Egypt, the scene of the schism. Meanwhile, the unfortunate document that was meant to be the flag of truce, if not the treaty of peace, developed a new line of cleavage in quite another direction. This cavalier treatment of Chalcedon gave mortal offence at Rome. For Chalcedon was the most Roman in its sympathies of all the general councils, since its elaborate statement of doctrine had been based on the great Leo's venerated Tome. The *Henoticon* was regarded in Rome as a distinctly heretical document, and it produced a severance between the Eastern and the Western churches which lasted for thirty-six years. Peter Mongus, the one champion of the document, was an unworthy man quite unfit to act as peacemaker, and while he was trying to force his bishops to accept it on pain of deposition, he was privately negotiating with the Pope Sylvester. On the accession of Felix to the papacy (A.D. 484), that pope immediately took strong measures. He cited Acacius to Rome; but Acacius declined to come at the bidding of his brother patriarch. Then Felix, with the support of an Italian synod, "deposed" Acacius; but the patriarch took no notice of his "deposition," and retained his position unmolested. Thus the *Henoticon* was another wedge driven in between the East and the West, and it scarcely wanted a prophet to predict what must be the end with this ever-widening fissure in the Catholic Church.

Anastasius, who succeeded Zeno in the year 491, was already well advanced in age, and yet he reigned for twenty-seven years, during the whole of which time Rome stood aloof from the Eastern Church in stern disapproval. The

emperor was welcomed as "the sweetest tempered of sovereigns," and greeted with the complimentary acclamation, "Reign as you have lived."[1] Unfortunately an immaculate character even when joined to an amiable disposition will not secure success in a ruler who lacks discernment and vigour. The emperor's spirit of toleration was intolerable to a society which clamours for violent polemics. Gradually he was driven to lean more and more to the Monophysite side. Wild stories were told of how monks and priests, archimandrites and patriarchs, behaved like dancing dervishes round the old man, some shouting "Anathema to the council of Chalcedon!" others, "Anathema to Eutyches—to Zeno—to Acacius!"

Constantinople now became a centre of frequent disturbances. The symbol of the Monophysites was Peter's addition to the Trisagion, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty," consisting of the phrase, "Who was crucified for us." When this full sentence was sung in the great Basilica the Catholic party shouted the Trisagion in its original shorter form. Soon the opponents came to blows and the quarrel spread to the streets. The orthodox party carried about the head of a Monophysite monk on a pole, crying, "See the head of an enemy of the Trinity"; they flung down the statues of Anastasius, burnt the houses of the two prefects, and received the emperor's emissaries with a shower of stones. The next day they rushed into the circus to see the aged man—now eighty-one years old—seated on his throne without either purple robe or diadem. Not having strength of voice to make himself heard in that wild, seething mob of excited people, he proclaimed his readiness to abdicate. Touched by the pathetic sight of their feeble, humiliated emperor, the people accepted some vague assurance that he would respect the faith of Chalcedon. But Anastasius was now in the hands of the Monophysites, and even after this pitiable scene he was driven to demand an anathema on the council of Chalcedon from the bishops. Since they refused, all over the East,

[1] See Gibbon, chap. xxxv.; Tillemont, *Hist. des Emp.* vi. 472–652.

but especially in Syria, orthodox bishops were driven out of their churches. When the pope interfered some negotiations followed, which Anastasius ended with unexpected dignity by declaring, "We can bear insults and contempt, but we cannot allow ourselves to be commanded."

Meanwhile, the rigour of persecution under the dominance of the Monophysites in the East even surpassed the ugly record of persecution by Valens and his Arian allies more than a century earlier. The bad pre-eminence in these exploits is accorded to Severus, who was patriarch of Antioch from A.D. 512 till 518.

These were six terrible years for those Syrians who adhered to the decision of Chalcedon. Neale, who is too ready to listen to the denunciation of a heretic by the orthodox, paints the character of Severus in the darkest colours.[1] But while we must accept the testimonies of bitter foes with some caution, it is difficult to resist the conclusion that this Monophysite patriarch was a man of blood. His presence in Alexandria and Constantinople at an earlier period had been the signal for sanguinary outbreaks at both places, for which he must be held more or less responsible. No sooner did he obtain the exalted position of the headship of the Church at Antioch with its supremacy over the Oriental bishops, than he expressly anathematised the council of Chalcedon in his synodical letters announcing his enthronement. A few complied at once; some yielded to violence; others stoutly resisted the heretical patriarch's contention. Among these, as Evagrius tells us, was Cosmas the bishop of the historian's native place, Epiphanea on the Orontes, who sent his senior deacon with a letter deposing Severus. It was a dangerous embassy, for the patriarch maintained the majesty of royal state at his palace and was held in awe by all about his court. So the deacon disguised himself in woman's attire, and approaching Severus "with delicate carriage," having let his veil fall to his breast, acted the part of a weeping suppliant presenting a petition, as he handed in the letter,

[1] *Patriarchate of Antioch*, pp. 163, 164.

and immediately after slipped away unobserved among the crowd.[1] The anecdote vividly illustrates the tyranny of the stern prelate and the terror he was inspiring. Of course he took no notice of what he would only regard as a daring insult. Poor Anastasius was now so much under the power of the Monophysites that he ordered his military commander in the Lebanon to eject Cosmas and another recalcitrant bishop from their sees, although with his usual mildness sending an apology with the order, and expressly stipulating that it must only be executed if this could be done without bloodshed.[2] Severus himself, if we are to believe the statements of the opposite party, acted in a very different spirit, loading orthodox monks and clergy with irons, slaughtering some and flinging out their dead bodies for birds and beasts to devour, drowning others in the Orontes.[3]

[1] Evagrius, iii. 34. [2] *Ibid.*
[3] Neale, *Patriarchate of Antioch*, p. 164; Theophanes, p. 136.

CHAPTER VIII

THE LATER CHRISTOLOGICAL CONTROVERSIES

(*a*) Evagrius, *Hist. Eccl.* iv.; Mansi, ix. x.; Theophanes, *Chronographia*; Anastasius, *Historia.*
(*b*) Gibbon, chap. xlvii.; Dorner, *Person of Christ*, Div. II. part i.; Otley, *The Incarnation*, part vii.; Hefele, *History of the Councils*, Eng. trans., vol. iv.

I. THE death of Anastasius and the accession of the rough soldier Justin (A.D. 518) put an end to the Monophysite prosperity, and with the withdrawal of the *Henoticon* also brought the separation from communion with Rome to an end. Except in Egypt, which remained Monophysite, the work of reunion was comparatively easy. The result was a triumph for the papacy and a strengthening of the power of Rome in the Church.

In April 527 Justin's nephew, Justinian, was associated in the government of the empire, and in August he became sole emperor by the death of his uncle. He was a man of simple, frugal habits, most industrious, and very decided in his adhesion to the decision of Chalcedon—proving his orthodoxy in the usual way—by persecuting the heterodox. One of the most important of Justinian's actions marks a further stage in the suppression of paganism. In the year 531 he closed the schools of philosophy at Athens, where the Neo-Platonists, the most determined enemies of Christianity, were teaching. This was the end of the faded glory of ancient Athenian culture. The same year Justinian enacted that all pagans and heretics should be excluded from civil and military offices. According to Procopius, one result of his drastic measures was that some of the ancient

sect of Montanists in Phrygia shut themselves up with their wives and children in their churches, set fire to the buildings, and perished in the flames.[1]

Justinian's consort, the beautiful and facinating Empress Theodora, has come down to history as a woman of utter depravity, to be classed with a Messalina or a Lucretia Borgia; but this scandal is solely owing to the account of her which Procopius left in his secret history, published after his death, according to which she was a notoriously vicious actress when she married the staid emperor.[2] Nothing that the same writer published during his lifetime brings the slightest reproach against her moral character, nor has any evidence been adduced to support the charges contained in the posthumous work. It appears that her name has suffered all these years from a gross libel due to wicked spite, or at best, to the inventions of a prurient imagination. Theodora was hated by the orthodox party on theological grounds; and yet none of the bishops whom she opposed ventured to breathe a word against her reputation. Surely that is strong evidence for the defence. There is no doubt that she had been an actress. But the real charge against her was that she was a zealous Monophysite. As patroness of the heretics, she was able to secure her friends some advantages while the attention of the government was distracted by the Gothic invasion of Italy and the consequent troubles that enveloped the empire.

Meanwhile the interminable theological controversy was entering on a new sphere in the discussion concerning "The Three Chapters."[3] This title is given to a formulated series of accusations—(1) against the person and writings of Theodore of Mopsuestia; (2) against the writings of Theodoret in opposition to Cyril; and (3) against the letter of Ibas of Edessa, a friend of Nestorius, addressed to the Persian

[1] Procopius, *Hist. Arc.* 11. An authority to be taken with some suspicion; but in the present case there does not seem to be good reason to doubt his terrible story.

[2] *Hist. Arc.* 9.

[3] Τρία κεφάλαια.

bishop Maris. It was cleverly argued that the real objection to the council of Chalcedon was not occasioned by its doctrinal statements, but was found in its approval of these men, who, it was asserted, were tainted with Nestorianism. Justinian accepted the convenient suggestion, and published an edict condemning the accused writers—one more of the many imperial acts of interference with fine questions of doctrine in the Church. The Eastern bishops, with their usual subserviency, for the most part submitted to the emperor's decree. The Westerns, especially the Africans, together with the Pope Vigilius, with their customary spirit of independence, refused to sign it. Thereupon Vigilius was summoned to Constantinople, where he was detained for about seven years, during the first of which Theodora died. At length the pope so far submitted as to secretly promise Justinian that he would condemn "The Three Chapters." But when a synod of Western bishops was got together they could not be brought to a similar compliance. The emperor then issued a long profession of faith which he commanded the pope and his bishops to sign. This was an inordinate act of despotism, and poor Vigilius, in spite of his submission earlier, felt compelled to resist, and even threatened excommunication against all who should yield. But the vacillating pope was no Hildebrand, and when soldiers were sent to arrest him he crept under the altar, whence he was being dragged out by his hair and beard when the outcries of shame from the people stopped the outrage, and he was allowed to escape to Chalcedon.

Meanwhile summonses were out for a general council, which met at Constantinople in May 553, attended by 165 bishops, including all the patriarchs of the East, but only five African bishops. This council, known as the *Fifth General Council*, condemned "The Three Chapters."[1] Vigilius, who had excused himself from attending, was terrified into submission to the decision of the council, after which he was permitted to return to Rome; but the

[1] Mansi, ix. 376; Evagrius, ii. 38.

miserable man died on the way, at Syracuse (A.D. 555) The bishops of Italy, Illyria, and Africa broke off from Rome because of the action of Vigilius, some of the churches they represented remaining aloof for nearly half a century.

The council of Ephesus in its severe condemnation of Nestorianism had prepared the way for Eutyches, and so for Monophysitism; the council of Chalcedon—acting under the influence of Rome—had condemned Eutychianism and thus apparently rather favoured its opposite, Nestorianism. Now the pendulum swung again. Undoubtedly this second council of Constantinople indicated a partial reaction against the council of Chalcedon, and a partial movement in the direction of Monophysitism. But it had more important issues in consolidating the Eastern Church and the authority of the emperor over it in opposition to the pretensions of Rome and the claims of the pope. This, and not the doctrinal decision, may be taken as the real note of the so-called "Fifth General Council."

On one side the Monophysite position was now advanced a further stage. Eutyches, the originator of the whole movement, had maintained that Christ's body was not as our body; that the transformation of the human nature in its combination with the Divine affected the body as well as the soul. Similarly, Dioscurus had asserted that it would be profane to speak of the blood of Christ as of the same substance with anything merely natural. In the later period Timothy Ælurus had held that Christ's humanity was different from ours. This was going further than Apollinarianism, further than Patripassianism, a long way on towards Docetism. But a new quarrel broke out among the Monophysite refugees at Alexandria in regard to this question. It was Julian of Halicarnassus who now especially developed and emphasised the doctrine of the incorruptibility of the body of Christ. He taught that it was insensible to natural passions and weaknesses, in opposition to Severus, the ex-patriarch of Antioch, who maintained that the body of Christ was corruptible up to the resurrection, after which it became incorruptible. Julian contended

that it underwent no change at the resurrection. His professed object was not to minimise the actual sufferings of Christ, but, as he argued, to exalt our conception of the great condescension of One who was naturally not liable to suffering in willingly accepting it for the sake of the redemption of the world.

The discussion might have come and gone as an innocent pastime of the refugees, if it had not been for a high-handed act of interference in another quarter. As if he had not enough to occupy his attention in the great crisis of the empire brought on by his Gothic wars, Justinian, always ready to meddle in Church affairs, plunged into this new dispute. While under the influence of Theodora, on whom he doted with an uxorious husband's infatuation for a sprightly young wife, he had yielded concessions to the Monophysites; after her death (A.D. 548) he had treated them more coldly; but in his later days he had again begun to favour them. Julian's views represented extreme Monophysitism, and Justinian adopted those views. He went so far as to issue an elaborate statement affirming the incorruptibility of our Lord's body, which he required the bishops to accept. Here was an emperor's creed to be forced upon the Church by the power of the State, an intolerable piece of tyranny! If this were submitted to, it would be just to say that while the bishop of Rome was pope of the Western Church, the emperor was pope of the Eastern Church. In fact this action went beyond the normal papal pretensions. Even popes left it for councils to decide the creed of the Church; but Justinian was usurping the function of an œcumenical council. Moreover, he was doing this in face of an exceptionally divided ecclesiastical condition among his subjects. Not only was he siding with those whom the majority of his people regarded as heretics, but, in regard to a point on which those heretics were divided, he was taking a side, and that the side of the extremists. The emperor followed up his doctrinal statement with coercive measures; for a despot's requirement of a creed is an edict; it has

the force of law. He deposed Eutychius the patriarch of Constantinople for refusing compliance with the imperial theology. He threatened the noble Anastasius, patriarch of Antioch,[1] but assailing him, as Evagrius says, "like some impregnable tower."[2] The timely death of the emperor (A.D. 565) put an end to further proceedings.

Now, in order to understand the policy of Justinian in this matter, we must not credit the vacillating emperor with theological bigotry. The key to the imperial policy in the long Monophysite dispute is to be sought in statecraft. Before this last piece of presumption the emperor had repeatedly interfered in the doctrinal disputes of the Church, and more than once he had ventured on making his own will known concerning one side or the other. Several of his predecessors had set him an example for such actions. But in the main the imperial aim throughout had been what we should call to-day an Erastian comprehensiveness. In the West Justinian saw huge limbs of his empire being torn away by the Goths; in the opposite direction he had to watch the rival power of Persia, ever on the alert to snatch at his Eastern provinces; and now he had his subjects divided among themselves by a bitter feud. The orthodox found it an easy and congenial task to thunder anathemas against the heretics; they felt no compunction in cutting them off from the Church. But the penalty of the close union of Church and State now obtaining in the Greek world was that this action was perilously like cutting them off from the State also, and so manufacturing rebels. No sovereign could take kindly to such a wilful disruption; in the perilous times of Justinian it would be simply suicidal. Thus his policy naturally tended to the reconciliation of the Monophysites. In the earlier part of his reign he had assembled leaders of both parties with a

[1] According to Evagrius, "a man most accomplished in Divine learning," "accessible and affable," yet "so strict in his manners and mode of life, as to insist on very minute matters, and on no occasion to deviate from a staid and settled frame, much less in things of moment," etc. (*Hist. Eccl.* iv. 40).

[2] *Ibid.*

view to their coming to an agreement. It was an abortive conference; such conferences usually are abortive when the question is doctrinal, however useful they may be when it is practical. It is true that the emperor's last action was not conciliatory; it was to throw the apple of discord afresh among his people. Plainly this was a mistake. Justinian often acted foolishly. But his aim had been to bring even the extreme Monophysites into the communion of the main body of the Church. The blunder, of course, was that for this purpose he was attempting to convert this main body of the Church to an extreme form of the heresy in question. That is like ordering a whole line of troops to change its pace to the time of the awkward squad which is out of step.

Justinian is best known to-day by the codification of Roman law which bears his name. It does not fall within our province to discuss that grand achievement which determined the character of European jurisprudence for all future ages. But it should be noticed that ecclesiastical laws take their place in the system side by side with civil and legislative. Some of these laws date from the time of Constantine onward; others are new edicts promulgated by Justinian himself. But the bulk of the code consists of old laws handed down from ancient times. This fusion of civil and ecclesiastical legislation is a sign not only of the close identification of Church and State now obtaining in the empire, but also of the absolute supremacy of the latter over the former in the Eastern provinces of the empire. The spirit of independence in the West and the rival power of the popes kept the same tyranny out of the papal provinces. Perhaps this is the best thing that can be said for the papacy, and it is a very great and honourable thing to be able to say. If it had not been for the popes—especially the two greatest popes, Leo and Gregory—Western Christendom would have been in imminent danger of sharing the fate of Eastern Christendom, the whole Church crouching subservient at the footstool of the emperor. And yet this must not be said

without qualification. While the popes were the chief champions of the Church's independence, the spirit of the Teuton in the West was very different from the spirit of the Eastern Greek and Armenian. Luther would have been equal to defying an imperial pope in his palace by the Bosphorus.

II. The Monothelete controversy, even more wearisome and unprofitable than the Monophysite discussions, of which it was a continuation and a new refinement, belongs chronologically to the second division of the history, that which opens with the advent of Mohammedanism and other factors of mediævalism. Nevertheless, it is essentially a patristic subject; its roots are altogether in the past; it has no relations with the special problems of the new age. Logically, therefore, and in the classification of subjects, it must have its place in this first division as the last flickering flame of theological thought lingering after the blaze of light that distinguished the age of the great Fathers had faded away. Since here at length the long series of discussions about the nature of Christ comes to an end, it will be most fitting to see this conclusion of patristic Christology before passing on to other subjects.

The Monophysites had contended that there was only one nature in Christ, the human and the Divine being fused together. Practically this meant that there was only the Divine nature, because the two did not meet on equal terms, and the overwhelming of the Finite by the Infinite left for our contemplation only the Infinite. Thus the Monophysite Christ was an Infinite Divine Person, who had drawn into His being our human nature, when He condescended to be born of Mary, and who had appeared under this veil of humanity, but who in His own consciousness and activity possessed and exercised all the faculties and powers of Divinity, and these only, not any borrowed from the human nature which He had completely absorbed and assimilated. This in fact, if not in verbal statement, was the ultimate issue of the Monophysite position.

Now we must regard the Monothelete contention as historically a branch of the Monophysite. But it appeared as an irenicon, as a happy compromise granting to the orthodox their main requirements and yet opening a door for the heretics. According to this view Christ did possess two natures. He was not only *of* two natures, combining in His person the human and the Divine. He remained *in* two natures; that is to say, He retained the two natures subsequent to the act of incarnation, all through His earthly life, and even after the resurrection, although that event resulted in a change in the condition of His body. But, according to the Monothelete, these two natures were so harmonised and blended in their co-operation that there was only one will in Christ, and that, of course, the Divine will.

At first, however, the notion of the wills was not raised, and the controversy began with the question as to whether we are to affirm "one activity,"[1] or "two activities,"[2] as operative in Christ. Sergius, the patriarch of Constantinople, states that he and Cyrus the bishop of Phasis were consulted by the Emperor Heraclius about this question, showing that whatever had been its source it was now much interesting the emperor's mind. True to the traditional ecclesiastical policy of his predecessor, but with more vigour in the execution of it, Heraclius was anxious to establish a *modus vivendi* between the Monophysites and their opponents. Thus from the first Monotheletism appears as a political movement. It was the energetic Heraclius' proposed compromise for bringing together the two parties whose bitter mutual antagonism he saw to be a menace to the State. Sergius worked well to further his master's object. First, he had a synod to fortify him for his enterprise; then he made good use of a collection of sayings of the Fathers supposed to favour the view of the one energy or operation, which was attributed to Mennas, patriarch of Constantinople under Justinian. At the third council of Constantinople (A.D. 680) this

[1] *μία ἐνέργεια.* [2] *δύο ἐνέργειαι.*

document was proved to be a forgery; the Roman legates pointed out a discrepancy of date, and the monk who had written it was discovered, dragged before the assembly and compelled to confess his guilt. But at its first appearance it was unquestioned. When Heraclius asked Sergius to supply him with testimony from the Fathers to the doctrine of the one activity, the patriarch sent him this precious fabrication. Cyrus also stood by the emperor and was rewarded by being promoted to the patriarchate of Alexandria (A.D. 630). Thus the two most influential patriarchates of the East were now in the hands of supporters of the new doctrine. But it was not to remain unchallenged.

The great opponent of the Monothelete heresy was the monk Sophronius, who proved to be the ablest and most vigorous controversial theologian of his age, and who has since been classed with Athanasius and Cyril as one of the chief champions of the faith. It was no light matter to lead the opposition, not only against the patriarchates of Constantinople and Alexandria, but also against the imperial government. Sophronius had to undertake his crusade in opposition to the united forces of Church and State. Nevertheless he fearlessly accepted the challenge which Cyrus flung down, and fought well for the opposing position. Cyrus selected for his watchword a phrase in the pseudo-Dionysius writings.

These writings, consisting of four treatises followed by some letters, were attributed in an uncritical age to St. Paul's convert, Dionysius the Areopagite. But we find no reference to them earlier than a conference at Constantinople in the reign of Justinian during the course of the Monophysite dispute (A.D. 532), when they were brought forward in favour of the heretical position. They cannot be much older than this period. If Cyril of Alexandria had known of them, surely he would have made use of the excellent weapons he could have found among them, exactly suited to his purpose. But when once in circulation, they were eagerly read and

before long they were made use of by all parties in support of their several contentions. In course of time they came to take a high place in the estimation of the Church, so that we must regard them as among the chief formative influences that issued in mediæval theology. In the West the papacy fed and fattened on them; and there scholasticism drew from them its root ideas. In the East they profoundly affected the final shaping of orthodoxy under the hands of the last of the Fathers, John of Damascus. The pseudo-Dionysiac writings are of a mystical character, and in them we find Christian theology intermingled with Neo-Platonic thought.[1]

Cyrus's watchword, borrowed from "Dionysius," was the phrase "one Divine-human activity."[2] Sophronius thought this a dangerous expression detracting from the humanity of Christ and bringing back the old error of Apollinaris. When Cyrus showed him a document asserting this single activity in Christ, Sophronius was so deeply moved that he flung himself at the patriarch's feet beseeching him by the sufferings of Christ not to impose such teaching on the Church. But his entreaty had no effect; the new position was welcomed with enthusiasm by a number of Monophysites, who thus became reconciled to the Church. It would seem for the moment that the policy of Heraclius was proving itself to be brilliantly successful. But this was only the beginning of the contest. The new Athanasius was not to be daunted. Finding his appeal to Cyrus of no avail, Sophronius went to Constantinople and laid an urgent plea before Sergius. This patriarch, an abler politician than his brother of Alexandria, saw the danger of the situation. The wand of peace was being converted into a battle standard. Accordingly Sergius endeavoured to suppress the controversy. At the same time he expostulated with Sophronius

[1] Migne, *Patrol. Gr.* iii., iv.; Westcott, "Dionysius the Areopagite," *Contemp. Review*, May 1867; Kanakis, *Dionys. der Areop., nach seinem Character als Philosoph* (Leipz. 1881); Möller in "Herzog."

[2] *μία θεανδρικὴ ἐνέργεια.*

for hindering the return of thousands now separated from the Church, with so much earnestness that the good man promised to remain silent. But when three or four years later he was made patriarch of Jerusalem, Sophronius did not consider the seal of silence any longer binding on him. The situation was entirely altered. In his position of influence he felt it his duty to speak out. So he gathered a synod which pronounced definitely for two wills and two activities. Unfortunately he stated the result of this decision in such a lengthy, bombastic document, that, before he could get copies of it sent round to the leading bishops, Sergius was able to present his views to the Pope Honorius, who never suspected the cloven hoof, and in his simplicity pronounced in favour of the essential Monothelete position. The pope's view was that there were two natures, each working its own way—therefore not with only one activity—but still under the control of one will.

This brings us to the second stage of the controversy. Never did a pope commit himself to heresy with a more innocent intention. But in point of fact not only did Honorius fall into what the Church was afterwards to condemn as a heresy; he even originated this heresy in the final shape which it assumed. Hitherto there has only been a question of one *activity*. Now, Honorius introduces the idea of the one *will*. Sophronius only lived two or three years after this; but shortly before his death, since the Mohammedan invasion then prevented him from leaving Palestine, he led Stephen the bishop of Dore to the site of Calvary, and there solemnly adjured him by the sufferings of Christ and the prospect of the final judgment to go to Rome and never rest till he had obtained from the apostolical See a condemnation of the doctrine of the single will in Christ.

In the year 638 Heraclius followed the unfortunate example of his predecessors and attempted to settle the theological dispute by imperial authority. At the suggestion

of Sergius he issued an edict entitled *Ecthesis*[1] — an *Exposition* of the faith. This was intended as a pacific regulation. It forbade the use of the word "activity"[2] in connection with the whole subject, and expressly prohibited the assertion of two activities as leading to the idea of two wills, which might be contrary one to the other. Thus it was distinctly Monothelete; it took the notion of the one will for granted. The *Ecthesis* was approved by councils at Constantinople, under Sergius and his successor Pyrrhus, and at Alexandria, under Cyrus—which was to be expected since these were now the two Monothelete centres. The other two Eastern patriarchates — which would have taken the opposite view—were silent. An awful calamity had overtaken them. The cities of Antioch and Jerusalem were now both in the hands of the Arabs; the Mohammedan wave of conquest had swept over Syria and Palestine. The new pope John condemned the document. Thus the papacy was purged of heresy. Then Heraclius was alarmed. These were not times for quarrelling with so powerful a man as the chief personage in the West. The one object of his ecclesiastical policy had been the consolidation of his empire in face of the devastating flood of Mohammedanism. The irony of history is rarely more apparent than in this dividing of Christendom on fine and yet finer points of doctrine at the very moment when its very existence is at stake. It is like the suicidal folly of the Jews at Jerusalem in carrying on civil war among themselves while the Roman legions were at their gates. Heraclius saw the danger and wrote at once to the pope disowning the unfortunate edict and throwing the blame of it on poor Sergius.

Ten years later (A.D. 648) Constantine IV., the grandson of Heraclius, issued another mandatory document which was called the *Type*,[3] that is to say, the model of faith.[4] This was less theological than the *Ecthesis*, and entirely neutral in tone. It forbade further discussion on the question of

[1] Ἔκθεσις τῆς πίστεως.
[2] ἐνέργεια.
[3] ὁ τύπος περὶ πίστεως.
[4] Mansi, x. 1030.

one will or two wills, and commanded all parties to be satisfied with the statements of Scripture and the decrees of the five general councils. It then formally repeated the *Ecthesis*; and it concluded with a scale of penalties for disobedience — degradation for clerics, confiscation of goods for laymen of the upper classes, flogging for those of lower station. The tyranny of this forcible silencing of discussion was quite in harmony with the methods of the empire.

Undoubtedly it was high time that some final step was taken if interference by the State was to be submitted to at all. Theodore the pope of Rome excommunicated Paul the patriarch of Alexandria. Paul retaliated by overthrowing the altar of the papal chapel at Constantinople and insulting the pope's envoys. The next year Theodore died, and Martin, one of these envoys, was elected to succeed him. The new pope summoned a synod at Rome, since known as the "First Lateran Council," which condemned Monotheletism, anathematised the leading supporters of the heresy, and denounced "the most impious *Ecthesis*," and "the most impious *Type*." For this Martin was arrested by the emperor's Western representative, the Exarch, carried off to Constantinople, rudely handled, and flung into prison more dead than alive. After suffering six months incarceration, and being subject to repeated trials, the pope was banished to Cherson in the Crimea, where he died (A.D. 655).[1] The next most prominent opponent of Monotheletism was Maximus, a member of a noble family. He and two other champions of the orthodox cause were dragged from Rome to Constantinople, first punished by having their tongues and right hands cut off, and then driven into exile.

At last this disastrous controversy was brought to a close by a decision of the sixth general council—the third council of Constantinople—which the Emperor Constantine Pognatus assembled in the imperial city on the 7th of Novem-

[1] There is a graphic account of Martin's cruel sufferings in the letter of an unnamed writer, entitled *Commemoratio eorum quæ sæviter*, etc.

ber, A.D. 680. Its proceedings were conducted with unusual decency and impartiality. The emperor presided during most of the sessions, and when he happened to be absent the presidential chair was left unoccupied. This council condemned Monotheletism, and even anathematised Pope Honorius for sanctioning "the impious doctrines" of Sergius. The heresy enjoyed a temporary revival during the brief reign of the adventurer Philippicus, who publicly burnt the original copy of the Acts of the Council. But his death was followed by its rapid extinction. After this it only lingered on among the Maronites of Lebanon till they came under the protection of the papacy, with which they are now in alliance. Originated with the sole object of establishing peace and union, it had been a source of discord from first to last. The reason of its failure is palpable. It was an olive branch presented on the point of a sword. Such a peace-offering could only provoke war.

CHAPTER IX

ORGANISATION AND WORSHIP

(*a*) *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*; Fulton, *Index Canonum*; *The Apostolical Constitutions*; *The Canons of Athanasius*; *The Codes of Theodosius and Justinian.*

(*b*) Bingham, *Antiquities*; Smith, *Dictionary of Antiquities*; Allen, *Christian Institutions* (I.T.L.); Stanley, *Christian Institutions*, 1881.

THE Church which had commenced as a simple brotherhood of Christians had now developed into a highly elaborated hierarchical organisation. Genuine Christianity with hope of future salvation was taken to be conterminous with membership in the Catholic Church. This membership was secured by baptism, and continued subject to discipline. Orthodoxy in belief and tolerable correctness of conduct were recognised conditions, failure in regard to either of which could be punished with excommunication—specifically exclusion from attendance at the Eucharist. But in point of fact discipline was almost confined to the question of orthodoxy, and there almost exclusively among the clergy; so that much laxity of conduct prevailed among the laity, who, though subject to pastoral oversight, rarely suffered the extreme penalty of expulsion from the Church. In other words, from being a select community dedicated to a holy life, the Church tended to become co-extensive with Christendom, especially with the empire regarded as Christian, though of course only consisting of the baptised. Then those men and women who aimed at a higher life began to separate themselves from the secularised Church. Yet they did not form a church within the Church. They

lived the life of ascetics, either separately or in communities. These people—as we shall see in the next chapter—largely escaped from ecclesiastical discipline. The monks to a great extent shook off the yoke of the bishops.

The centre of this hierarchical system was the bishop; the lower clergy were his ministers; the higher clergy were but bishops of important cities with extended authority over their brother bishops. Episcopacy was the essential characteristic of the Church organisation.

The clergy were drawn from all ranks of life. No special training was considered necessary to fit them for their duties, and some came direct from secular work to administer the affairs of the Church. In the smaller cities bishops carried on businesses for their livelihood—as farmers, shepherds, shopkeepers, etc. It was expressly ordered that a bishop should not neglect his flock by travelling out of his parish for business purposes, take interest for loans, or lower the wages of his workpeople. But where the funds of a Church were sufficient to support its bishop his engagement in secular affairs was discouraged. Thus we read in the *Canons of Athanasius*: "O thou levitical priest, wherefore dost thou sell or buy? Unto thee are given the first-fruits of all," etc.[1] So lucrative did the post become that in some cases it was sought for the sake of its emoluments;[2] and the bishops had to be warned that the money at their disposal should be used for the assistance of widows and orphans or as loans to other persons in need.[3] The council of Chalcedon expressly forbade bishops, priests, and monks to engage in commerce.[4] During the fourth century it was taken for granted that the bishop was a married man. Thus in the *Canons of Athanasius*, the Pauline precept is repeated that "the bishop must be in all things blameless, married to one wife," etc.;[5] and again, "The

[1] *Canons of Athanasius*, iii. The probable genuineness of these Canons has been vindicated by Mr. Crumm, who has clearly demonstrated their antiquity.

[2] *Ibid.* v. [3] *Ibid.* vi. [4] *Canons of Chalcedon*, iii.

[5] *Canons of Athanasius*, v.

priests must behave themselves according as the apostles have ordained; wherefore the bishop must be in nothing blameworthy, married to one wife," etc.[1] Gregory of Nazianzus's father was the bishop of that town. Of course the case of monks who became bishops was different.

While a college training was not considered to be essential as a preparation for the ministry, the more famous bishops were highly educated men. Literary culture was acquired at Cæsarea, Alexandria, Constantinople, and above all at Athens; theological training was taken after this in one of the great schools of theology, at Alexandria, Antioch, or Edessa. The canonical age for the priesthood or a bishopric was thirty. One of the Sardican canons (A.D. 346, 347) ordered that if a rich man or a lawyer were proposed as bishop he should not be appointed till he had ascended by degrees through the offices of reader, deacon, and priest, and that he should spend a considerable time in each grade of the ministry. But this rule of caution was frequently set aside, and candidates were hurried through the inferior orders when their appointment was urgent. The bishops were supposed to be elected by their congregations; but more often they were designated by the metropolitans of their provinces, with the co-operation of the neighbouring bishops. While the priesthood of the clergy was now universally recognised, their social separation from the laity was a slow and gradual process. At first they wore no distinctive vestments. By the beginning of the fifth century some among them began to don clothing of a more sober hue than was fashionable at the time. So they appeared as the Puritans or Quakers among the gay society people of their day. Jerome condemned this distinction of dress. The sixth century saw the invention of the tonsure. The clergy were now forbidden to wear the long hair of the dandies of their day. The unmarried clergy lived together under the eye of their bishop and slept in a common dormitory.

The bishop presides over his own church and also the

[1] *Canons of Athanasius*, vi.

surrounding district, which is known in the East as a "parish," not a "diocese" — that word being applied politically to a large division of the empire. It is his function to appoint and ordain the lower clergy. He is treasurer of the Church funds and custodian of her doctrine and discipline. It is the voice of the bishops that settles both the creed and the canons of discipline in the synods. Bishops have certain privileges and immunities. They are not to be sworn in courts of justice; they can act as intercessors; they preside at Church courts. Each bishop is strictly confined to his own parish. We meet with neither a plurality of bishops in one such district, nor with the pluralism which disgraced the Western Church in later times when one prelate enjoyed a host of Church dignities. That was expressly forbidden at Chalcedon.[1]

The unity of the Church is mainly preserved by the intercommunication between the bishops and their meeting together in local synods or larger councils. These synods and councils are not held in our modern Presbyterian style at regular intervals for the transaction of normal business, at all events at first. They are special expedients resorted to on occasion for the settlement of difficulties. But the council of Chalcedon ordered that synods should meet twice a year.[2] While the œcumenical councils were always summoned by the emperor, local synods were called together by the bishops of the chief churches in the districts concerned.

The bishop of the principal city in a province is known as the "metropolitan," and he corresponds to the archbishop of a province in the West. The specific functions of the metropolitan are to act with the other bishops of his province in ordaining bishops—his consent being deemed essential to a valid election; to exercise supervision over the bishops and take action where discipline was needed; to summon and preside at synods; to communicate the decisions of synods to the other metropolitans.

[1] Canon x. [2] Canon xix.

Lastly, we have the patriarchs, higher even than the metropolitans, with corresponding duties, namely, to ordain one another and the metropolitans; to exercise supreme supervision and discipline over their section of the Church; to preside at the larger synods and œcumenical councils; to communicate with one another and co-operate for the unity and harmony of the Church, not however as a joint committee of government, since in the last resort each is independent in his own sphere; to serve as the link of connection with the State, communicating with the emperor and the civil government.

In this way we see all the parts of the Catholic Church linked together, while a considerable amount of home rule is permitted for the individual bishops. The lower clergy are directly responsible to their own bishops. While free and independent under normal conditions, these bishops are bound by the canons of the councils, and it is for them especially that the creed is authorised; since they are the custodians of orthodoxy their own orthodoxy is a matter of supreme concern. Thus in the main theological controversy is a battle of bishops. At critical times, in special emergencies, the metropolitans may have to interfere with the bishops of their provinces; and in great affairs affecting the whole Church or branches of it the patriarchs take action.

Most of this system was developed during ante-Nicene times. The one feature which becomes specially prominent in the later period is the patriarchate. There were five patriarchs. Of these only one was in the West — the patriarch of Rome. The others were at Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, and Constantinople. The bishop of Rome presided over the Italian and Gallican præfectures; but Milan and Ravenna—being in turn imperial capitals—as well as North Africa, long clung to their independence. The patriarch of Jerusalem was exceptional. He only presided over a very small area, holding his post of dignity in deference to the sanctity of his city. The patriarch of Antioch had charge of the fifteen provinces contained in Syria, Cilicia, Arabia, and Mesopotamia; the patriarch of Alexandria was

set over the nine provinces of Egypt; the patriarch of Constantinople had as many as twenty-eight provinces under his control, contained in the three imperial dioceses of Pontus, Thrace, and Asia Minor.

At the time of the council of Nicæa there were only three patriarchs—those at Rome, Antioch, and Alexandria. Though the first place was allowed to Rome, they were regarded as essentially equals, in recognition of an established custom. Canon vi. begins as follows: "Let the ancient custom prevail in Egypt, Lybia, and Pentapolis; so that the bishop of Alexandria have jurisdiction in all these provinces, since this is customary[1] for the bishop of Rome also. Likewise in Antioch and the other provinces, let the churches retain their prerogatives." Constantinople was not then existing; the building of that city was only commenced five years after the council (A.D. 330). Half a century later the patriarchate of the new imperial capital is not only recognised in the second œcumenical council—the council of Constantinople (A.D. 381); but it is set higher than its seniors in the East and associated in a sort of double primacy with that of Rome. The third canon of this council runs as follows: "The bishop of Constantinople shall have the prerogative of rank next after the bishop of Rome; because Constantinople is new Rome."[2]

The Greeks commonly interpret this canon as implying no inferiority for their own city by giving a temporal sense to the preposition *μετά*. In itself that interpretation might seem strained; but it appears to be confirmed by the less ambiguous language of a later council. The council of Chalcedon (A.D. 451), in Canon xxviii., when referring to "the prerogatives of the most holy church of Constantinople, new Rome," decrees as follows: "For

[1] *τοῦτο συνηθὲς ἐστιν, i.e.* this sort of thing, a similar arrangement is customary.

[2] *τὸν μέν τοι Κωνσταντινουπόλεως ἐπίσκοπον ἔχειν τὰ πρεσβεῖα τῆς τιμῆς μετὰ τὸν τῆς Ῥώμης ἐπίσκοπον, διὰ τὸ εἶναι αὐτὴν νέαν Ῥώμην.* This is confirmed by Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* v. 8; and Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.* vii. 9.

the Fathers rightly granted prerogatives to the throne of the elder Rome, because that city was the capital.[1] And the 150 most religious bishops, actuated by the same design, assigned equal prerogatives[2] to the most holy throne of new Rome, justly judging that the city which is honoured with the sovereignty of the Senate, and enjoys equal privileges with the elder imperial Rome, should in ecclesiastical matters also be magnified as she is, and rank next after her."[3] Here we have the same ambiguity in the use of the preposition μετά; but in this case following unambiguous terms of equality. Surely the not very difficult reconciliation of the two forms of expression is that Rome is simply regarded as *primus inter pares*. The two patriarchs are really equal in rank; but a certain precedence is given to the bishop of Rome, for in this case the temporal sense of μετά is scarcely allowable.

Two facts of importance should be noted here. First, the essential equality of the patriarchs of Rome and Constantinople; second, the purely political grounds of this equality. It is the imperial rank of the new city that gives dignity to its bishop. New Rome has no St. Peter, no power of the keys; she is supported in case of necessity by something very different from that mystical privilege—by the power of the sword. Thus from the beginning we see the Erastianism of the church at Constantinople.

At first the rivalry with distant Rome was not felt. It was Alexandria that resented the honours accorded to the upstart patriarchate. We have seen how the theological controversies of the fourth and fifth centuries were entangled with personal jealousies of the patriarchs of Alexandria and Constantinople, and when very pronounced, with the more widespread rivalry of the cities they presided over. Subsequently they developed into national and racial divisions, the Copts of Egypt standing opposed to the Greeks of Constantinople. Antioch was not so

[1] διὰ τὸ βασιλεύειν τὴν πόλιν ἐκείνην. [2] τὰ ἴσα πρεσβεῖα.

[3] καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἐκκλησιαστικοις ὡς ἐκείνην μεγαλύνεσθαι πράγμασι δευτέραν μετ' ἐκείνην ὑπάρχουσαν.

directly concerned with this deadly feud between the two rival Western patriarchates. While they were in constant communication by that highway of commercial traffic, the Ægean Sea, the Syrian capital lay back in the East. Still, she had her old differences with Alexandria, and she was more directly associated with Constantinople, so that she more often sided with the imperial patriarchate.

In the year 550 Justinian conferred on the patriarch of Constantinople the privilege of receiving appeals from the other patriarchs. By this time, backed up by the power of the autocrat, the bishop of the chief city of the empire was threatening to become a veritable pope, in our later sense of the title. It would have needed rare prescience then to have discerned that not Constantinople, but Rome, was destined to develop the monstrous assumption of universal supremacy over the Church. It looked as though that city of ruins, neglected by the emperor, subject to the ravages of successive invaders, pillaged and impoverished, were doomed to decay, if not to extinction, with her episcopal See and all its Petrine claims. Meanwhile the brilliant metropolis on the Bosphorus, with its basilicas and palaces, its wealth, its splendour, its luxury, promised not only to take the first place politically and socially—which indeed it had already done most effectually—but also to secure ecclesiastical primacy. Nobody could then have dreamed of the proud triumphs of a Hildebrand. But the Latin Church never did dominate Constantinople except at a much later period, and then only for a brief interval and by brute force.

The rivalry between the two patriarchs came to an acute crisis before the end of the sixth century. Fortunately for the Western Church one of the greatest of all the popes was then seated in the chair of Peter. This was Gregory the Great—the missionary pope to whose zeal South England owes the light of the gospel. He was also the Italian patriot who saved Rome from the Lombards when the miserable Exarch at Ravenna had hopelessly failed to repel the rude invaders. Thus he followed in

the brilliant tradition of his greatest predecessor, Leo I., the almost miraculous saviour of Rome from the Huns. Further, Gregory is reckoned the last of the Latin Fathers. If not an original theologian, still he struck the keynote of mediæval theology, and left in his works almost all the doctrinal notions that prevailed during the Middle Ages. This remarkable, many-sided man now came forward as the champion of the Church's liberty, rebuking the lofty claims of his brother at Constantinople.

Gregory had been to the imperial city at an earlier time on the bootless errand of seeking the aid of the emperor's troops to defend Rome from the Northern invaders. When there he had witnessed the elevation of a famous ascetic, "John the Faster," to the patriarchal dignity. No accusation has been made against the character of this patriarch, who was said to be personally humble and unambitious. But he put forth the highest claims for his office, claims which were all the more dangerous because they were detached from his own individuality and urged with a sense of loyalty to his Church. In summoning a synod at Constantinople in the year 588 to settle the affairs of the Church at Antioch, John assumed the title of "Universal Archbishop."[1] Gregory was indignant at what he regarded as the pretensiousness of the title. "I hope in Almighty God," he cried, "that the Supreme Majesty will confound his hypocrisy."[2] He sent to the offending patriarch what in writing to the emperor he called "a sweet and humble admonition," in which, as he said, "honesty and kindness were combined,"[3] but promising an appeal to the Church if this failed. Gregory also wrote to the Emperor Maurice urging that the title of "Universal Bishop" was novel and unheard of, and a contravention of the precepts of the gospel which enjoin humility, and further, that it deprived the other patriarchs and bishops of the honour due to them.[4] In both these letters he claimed that the title had

[1] *οἰκουμενικὸς ἀρχιεπίσκοπος.*
[2] Gregory the Great, *Epp.* v. 45.
[3] *Epp.* v. 18.
[4] *Epp.* v. 20.

been offered by the council of Chalcedon to the bishop of Rome, but never used by him. That, as Gieseler points out, was a mistake—in the way Gregory understood it—for the title had only been used generally for all patriarchs.[1]

This incident has been pointed to as an instance of papal aggressiveness, and Gregory has been accused of priestly pride and ambition. But such a view is neither charitable nor just. It is true that he uses strong language in his expostulation; but patriarchs were accustomed to write to one another with moral fervour and in a tone of authoritativeness when they believed that they had the judgment of the Church at their back. Gregory made no direct claim for himself or his office. The curious fact is that when the title "Universal Bishop" was first appropriated, this was not by the pope of Rome, but by the pope of Constantinople, and that the Roman patriarch rebuked his brother, not for seizing a title that he used himself—though he hinted that it had been offered to a predecessor—but for adopting one that no bishop had a right to hold, since it was derogatory to his fellow-bishops. Gregory here furnishes the opponents of the papacy with admirable arguments to be used against the monstrous claims of later occupants of his own See.

Side by side with the development of the organisation of the Church there went on the increasing elaboration of its rites and ceremonies. In the conduct of worship various functions were assigned to the different orders of the clergy, according to their places in the ascending scale of the hierarchy. In the town churches the bishops were at the head of their own congregations taking the leading part of the solemn functions, and, as a rule, preaching to their people. The whole ceremony of the worship centred in the Eucharist. This was known as "the mystery"[2] *par excellence*. It is a highly significant fact that, while the Roman Christian, with his respect for law and authority, called the chief

[1] Gieseler, *Eccl. Hist.*, 2nd Period, 1st Div. ch. iii. § 94, note 72.

[2] τὸ μυστήριον.

office of his religion a *Sacrament*,[1] or oath of allegiance, his Greek brother used a word that was already familiar to the people as the title of a secret ritual witnessed only by the initiated and carefully guarded from the intrusion of the vulgar. Thus the word, which in the New Testament always means a truth formerly hidden, but now through Christ publicly revealed,[2] came to be torn entirely away from its primitive Christian signification and used altogether in its conventional pagan sense. Meanwhile there was a growing approximation to pagan ritual in the ceremonials of the Church and the feelings of awe with which they were approached. The homely love feast, at which rich and poor sit down to a common meal side by side, while they commemorate their Lord's death by eating and drinking some of the bread and wine or milk provided for it, has given place to a solemn function of miraculous potency. Baptism precedes the right to share in this tremendous mystery, as an ablution is necessary for those about to be initiated in the secret rites of Demeter at Eleusis. The priest at the altar is regarded as performing a really efficacious act. Although as yet the doctrine of the real presence is not formally and officially pronounced and authorised by the Church, it is now very generally held and very distinctly taught.

It is in the fourth century that we see the mystical character of the body of Christ so treated as plainly to involve the doctrine of transubstantiation, although the notion has to wait long for official definition and confirmation as a dogma of the Church. It had been adumbrated in still more ancient times. Even as early as the first half of the second century we have Ignatius using ecstatic language about the body and blood of Christ that faintly foreshadows the idea which is destined to become the central factor of the Catholic faith.[3] The Alexandrian teachers Clement and Origen are satisfied with the symbolical meaning of the communion; and so is Eusebius in the fourth century, as when he refers to "the memory"[4]

[1] *Sacramentum*..

[2] *e.g.* 1 Cor. xv. 51; Col. i. 26.

[3] *e.g.* Ignatius, *Epist. to Rom.* vii.

[4] τὴν μνήμην.

of Christ's sacrifice, "by symbols[1] both of His body and of His saving blood."[2] On the other hand, Athanasius shows signs of mystical ideas attached to the elements, especially as the sources of immortality by their effects on our bodies when we participate. Thus he speaks of "the holy altar, and on it bread of heaven, and immortal, and that giveth life to all that partake of it, His holy and all-holy body";[3] and yet in another place he says that the very object of the ascension was to draw men away from the thought of eating the body.[4] Evidently we are here at a transition stage. Some minds go further than others, and the same mind oscillates between the symbolical and the mystical conceptions.

Basil dwells on the peculiar sanctity of the communion and the benefit of daily participation in it; but he is far from ascribing to it a merely magical efficacy irrespective of intelligent ideas. Thus he says, "In no respect does he benefit who comes to the communion without understanding the word according to which the participation of the body and the blood of the Lord is given. But he that partakes unworthily is condemned";[5] and again, more definitely, "What is the peculiar benefit of those that eat the bread and drink the cup of God? To keep the continual memory[6] of Him that died for us and rose again."[7]

But now when we turn to Basil's brother, Gregory of Nyssa, we find a very different tone. Gregory was an enthusiastic Platonist and Origenist. Here however he entirely departs from the simple symbolism of the Alexandrian school. We are sometimes told that the dogma of transubstantiation dates from the Fourth Lateran Council, as late as the thirteenth century. That is true as regards the authoritative enforcement of acceptance of it on the papal Church, although Berengar had been condemned

[1] διὰ συμβόλων. [2] *Demonst. Evang.* i.

[3] *De Nicæno Con. c. Arium*, p. 125, in Hebert, *The Lord's Supper*, vol. i. p. 154.

[4] *Ibid.* p. 156. [5] *Ibid.* p. 194. [6] τὴν μνήμην φυλάσσειν διηνεκῆ.

[7] Hebert, *Lord's Supper*, vol. i. p. 193.

more than a century earlier (A.D. 1059) for denying it. The mediæval schoolmen were the first to attempt metaphysical explanations of the doctrine. But the essential idea appears full blown as early as the fourth century, and to nobody is the formulation of it more distinctly attributable than to Gregory of Nyssa. This daring and original Church Father writes, "The body of Christ was *transmuted*[1] to the flesh of God by the indwelling of God the Word. I do well then in believing that now also the bread of God the Word, when consecrated, is being *transmuted*[2] into the body of God the Word."[3] Together with this notion of transubstantiation Gregory also has the idea of miraculous effects produced by the Divine food on the persons of the recipients of the communion. Thus he says, "For as a little leaven, as the apostle says, changes and assimilates the whole lump to itself; so the body of Christ which was by God put to death, having come to be in our body, transmutes and transfers it all into its own character. For as when the destructive agent[4] was mingled with the sound (body), all that it was mingled with was made worthless with it, so the immortal body also, having come to be in him that has received it, transmuted the whole also into its own nature. But indeed it is not possible for anything to come to be in the body except it be well mixed with the bowels by being eaten and drunk. Surely then it is requisite to receive, in the way possible to our nature, the power of the Spirit that is to quicken us."[5] We can scarcely conceive of a more grossly materialistic notion of the use of the Sacrament. But we must observe all along that it is a materialistic end the theologian has in view. The body of Christ is so to transmute the body of the communicant that it shall survive the shock of death and be capable of resurrection. Thus the eating and drinking of the Eucharistic elements by the Christian is supposed to secure for his body what the Egyptian aimed at by the art of embalming, what the

[1] μεταποιήθη.
[2] μεταποιεῖσθαι.
[3] Hebert, p. 266.
[4] *i.e.* Sin, as the context shows.
[5] Hebert, pp. 204, 205.

Pharaohs would make doubly sure with granite sarcophagus and massive pyramid.

What Gregory of Nyssa laboured to expound and enforce was accepted and popularly preached by Chrysostom, and it became henceforth the normal doctrine of the Church. The West was not slow to adopt the same ideas. We have movements towards them in the writings of Hilary; and Ambrose tells strange things of the magical efficacy of the sacred elements. Still, with this doctrine which meant so much for the Latin Church in all subsequent ages, as with so many other doctrines, it was the Greek theologians who first gave definite expression to it. Nevertheless, belief in transubstantiation did not make way without difficulties and objections in some quarters. For instance, Palladius tells of an old monk near Scetis who much distressed two of his comrades by being unable to accept it. They agreed to pray for a week that the doubter might be enlightened. "And the Lord hearkened to both," says Palladius. "And when the week was fulfilled they came on the Lord's Day to the church, and the three stood together alone on one seat, and the old man was in the middle. And their eyes were opened, and when the bread was placed on the holy table, it appeared to the three only as a child, and when the presbyter stretched out his hand to break the bread, lo! an angel of the Lord came down from heaven with a sword and slew the child as a sacrifice,[1] and emptied its blood into the cup. But when the presbyter brake the bread into small portions, the angel also began to cut out of the child small portions; and as they drew near to partake of the holy things there was given, to the old man alone, bleeding flesh; and he cried out, saying, 'I believe, Lord, that the bread is Thy body and the cup Thy blood.' And straightway the flesh in his hand became bread according to the mystery, and he partook, giving thanks to God. And the old men say to him, 'God knew man's nature, that it cannot eat raw flesh, and on this account transmuted[2] the body into bread and His

[1] ἔθυσε. [2] μετεποίησε.

blood into wine for them that receive in faith.' And they gave thanks to God concerning the old man that he did not lose his labours; and the three went with joy into their cells." [1] Here it is plain enough that Berengarius, Wycliffe, and the Reformers had been anticipated by the old sceptical monk. The interesting point in the story is that his doubts were dispelled by a vision in answer to prayer. This must be taken in conjunction with the many other monkish marvels with which Palladius fills his pages. No unprejudiced person can read the story without being convinced of the sincerity and genuine devoutness of these three simple-minded monks. It carries us beyond the plain paths of history to obscure regions of psychology, and there we must be content to leave it.

[1] Hebert, vol. i. pp. 329, 330.

CHAPTER X

EASTERN MONASTICISM

(*a*) *The Book of Paradise*, by Palladius, etc., trans. by E. A. Wallis Budge; *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*; Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* iv. 23; Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.* i. 12–14; iii. 14; vi. 28–34; Evagrius, *Hist. Eccl.* iv. 33–35; vi. 23, 24; Sulpicius Severus, *Dialog.* i.

(*b*) Zöchler, *Kritische Geschichte der Askek*, 1863; *Texts and Studies*, vi., Dom Cuthbert Butler, "The Lausiac History of Palladius"; Harnack, *Monasticism*, 1901; Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, chap. xxxvii.

WE have seen that in the region of thought it was the Eastern branch of the Church that developed theology and settled the creed of Christendom. Now we have to observe how in matters of practice and conduct it was this same Oriental district that shaped the ideal and advanced farthest towards its attainment. After the early days of joyous liberty, not only during the patristic period, but right through the Middle Ages, asceticism is synonymous with sanctity for the bulk of the Church, both Eastern and Western. Now and again there appears a mystic, out of all relation to time and circumstance, as by its nature mysticism always is; and then we have a flash of light on the spirituality of religion realised by practical love. But in the main, the ideal of the Christian life all down the ages involved on one side renunciation of the world, castigation of the body, a crushing down of natural affections, and on the other side intense, whole-hearted devotion, stoical endurance, unflinching fidelity to creed and Church. Only a select minority seriously pursued this difficult aim.

The fourth century is the great age of the rise and development of monasticism in the East; a century later we see it rapidly spreading through the West. This Western movement was mainly stimulated by Jerome, who had spent years in his cell at Bethlehem, and organised by Cassian, who brought to Marseilles ideas he had gathered from Basil's arrangements in Asia Minor. Thus both of these men who were the chief influences leading to the formation of early Western monasticism—the one for its inspiration, the other for its regulation—derived their impulses and directions from the East. It is to the history of the Eastern Church, therefore, that the origin and development of monasticism belong.

The roots of monasticism lie far back in the past. Its development may be traced through the following stages: —(1) General Asceticism; (2) Specific Asceticism; (3) Anchoritism; (4) Cœnobitism; (5) Regulated Monasticism.

1. A spirit of asceticism is always found hovering round the idea of religion even where it has not penetrated deeply into that idea. Prayer and fasting go often together. While our Lord never commanded the latter practice nor even commended it,[1] and while He justified His disciples in neglecting the custom,[2] He assumed that it would be practised in times of sorrow,[3] and He also gave directions for unostentatiousness in the performance of it by His disciples, implying that, as Jews, they would be carrying on their Jewish habits in this matter.[4] In point of fact it was practised in apostolic times, though especially if not exclusively on critical occasions of exceptionally earnest prayer.[5] The Palestinian Christians of the sub-apostolic age were warned not to fast on the Jews' fasting-days—an admonition implying that fasting on set days was part of their regular practice.[6] In later times it was always pursued

[1] The word "fasting," *νηστεία*, in Mark ix. 29, of A.V. and T.R., is not critically authorised; nor does it appear in the parallels of Matthew and Luke.

[2] Mark ii. 18, 19. [3] *Ibid.*, ver. 20. [4] Matt. vi. 16–18.

[5] *e.g.* Acts xiii. 3. [6] *Didaché*, 8.

more or less as part of the regular Christian life among those who aimed at thoroughness.

2. During the second century asceticism received a powerful impulse from sectional bodies of Christians in protest against the increasing secularisation of the Church after the high enthusiasm of primitive times had cooled down. This was especially cultivated by the Gnostics, who claimed that in practical ethics as well as in intellectual conceptions they constituted a sort of spiritual aristocracy among their fellow Christians. Marcion, while attempting to follow St. Paul in his gospel of grace, appeared as a moral reformer in a quite un-Pauline asceticism, although his "forbidding marriage" like his other extravagances was really an exaggerated and distorted Paulinism.[1] The Montanists also pressed the rigour of their Puritanism in the same direction. On the Jewish side the Encratites were pronounced ascetics. Meanwhile, as usual, the main body of the Church took a middle course; it regarded asceticism with great respect, while not requiring it. Virginity is repeatedly honoured in the *Shepherd of Hermas*,[2] and Justin Martyr refers to celibate old men and women in terms of admiration.[3] By the third century this idea is much advanced, and we find Cyprian ranking celibacy as definitely higher than marriage.[4] By the fourth century we see this view of giving exceptional honour to virginity (while not demanding it, as had been done by the Encratites, Marcion, Tatian, and other Gnostics) definitely registered as the rule of the Church. In the *Apostolical Constitution* vows of virginity are recognised though not demanded.[5] Here then we are at the second stage in the development of asceticism. Certain people elect to live a celibate life and take vows accordingly. But these people do not come out from among their fellows; they mingle with general society; they remain as members of the family in their own homes.

3. The next stage is the most fertile and significant.

[1] *e.g.* 1 Cor. vii. 1, 7, 8. [2] e.g. *Sim.* 9, 10. [3] *1 Apol.* 15.
[4] e.g. *de Habitu Virg.* 23. [5] *Const. Apost.* iv. 14.

The end of the third century and the beginning of the fourth saw the rise of the anchorites. These men forsook the cities and fled into the desert, living in solitary huts or caves or even out in the open air exposed to all weathers, roughly and thinly clad, feeding meagrely on a vegetarian diet, castigating themselves with vigorous self-discipline, vying with one another in an eager rivalry of self-mortification, spending their time in prayer, meditation, wrestling with evil impulses, performing a minimum of work, if any, just sufficient for a bare livelihood, by cultivating a little plot of ground, basket-making, or other manual labour, but when otherwise provided for doing nothing of the kind, often developing amazing extravagances of self-torture, sometimes going mad in their wild, cruel life, sometimes flinging it up and rushing into the vortex of city dissipation with the fury of a fierce reaction.

The rapid rise and spread of this movement, which proved to be so immensely influential on all subsequent ages, demands an explanation; and seeing that it took place at a particular historical moment, we must look for that explanation in part at least among the circumstances of the times. The main root of monasticism, as of all asceticism, is to be found in the dichotomy of human nature, the discord between the animal part and the soul in the constitution of man, the war between the flesh and the spirit—a conflict realised in Indian religions as keenly as in Christianity. But if that is always present the question faces us, Why did it take this peculiar form of monasticism especially at the beginning of the fourth century A.D.? This was just the time when the tempest of persecution which had swept over the Christians from time to time passed away, and the sunshine of imperial favour bringing with it a luxurious summer of fashion broke out over the Church. Formerly the better life had been braced by the buffeting of adverse winds; now it was in danger of being relaxed by the soft zephyr of worldly prosperity. The adoption of Christianity as the court religion turned on to it the stream of fashion. The world crowded into the

Church; the consequence was that the Church became rapidly assimilated to the world. In the hard times the confessor was regarded as the athlete. His endurance then toughened his spiritual muscles. Now the occasion for that fine athleticism had passed. How was the pure flame of devotion to be kept clear and bright in the stifling atmosphere of a world nominally Christian, but really almost as unspiritual as the pagan society it was succeeding? That was the question of the hour. Earnest men answered it in a way that we may think selfish, if not cowardly. Instead of remaining in the world as its leaven, they fled from the world to escape its contamination. But the mischief of their mistake has been exaggerated where it was least hurtful. These men were not lost to society as moral influences. It became customary for town bishops and others to take their holidays in a retreat with an anchorite for a spiritual tonic, as modern town workers recruit their strength by mountaineering or some other recreation in touch with nature. The fame of great anchorites spread through the Church and held up the ideal of the simple life to the people of a decadent civilisation. Some were preachers whom the multitude sought after like John the Baptist in the wilderness. Again and again a monk trained by the discipline of solitude was called to fill some high post in the Church, and then, responding to the unwelcome summons, proved himself singularly effective by reason of his detachment from secular concerns.

There is another side; but that is scarcely where the superficial observer might look for it. It is doubtful if the men who fled from the world could have influenced it much more by adopting the ordinary life of citizens than they did by awakening the popular imagination and firing the popular enthusiasm from their lonely retreats.

The real mischief of monasticism was more remote and subtle, but not less hurtful in the end. The empire suffered by the withdrawal of so many of the strongest men from public service. Besides, for the best people not to marry, and for the continuation of the population to be left to

men and women of a second grade morally, must have made for the deterioration of the race. Yet to hold up the ascetic ideal as the loftiest to aim at tended in that direction. It is evident that the diminution of the effective population caused by the enormous exodus of celibates into the wilderness, just at the time when swarms of rapidly growing Teutonic peoples were gathering on the confines of the empire and even bursting through and pouring over it, was one of the direct causes of the break-up of the empire. The later emperors saw this and some of them regarded the monks as the deadliest enemies of the State. Moreover, even considered ecclesiastically, monasticism—especially in its earlier stages—acted as a disintegrating influence. In his desert retreat the monk was well out of reach of the bishop. He recited his psalms and conducted his devotions in his own way, and so shook himself free of the stiffening rubric that was followed in the usual assemblies for public worship. He was a Free Churchman at a time when authority was strenuously maintained in the Church as a whole. In the honour that was spontaneously given him by an admiring public he became a dangerous rival to the bishop. Usually he was a fierce champion of orthodoxy; but his orthodoxy tended to become narrow, hard, cruel. Nevertheless, in spite of all this, it may be that monasticism saved the situation at the critical moment when the Church was in danger of being confused with the world, a river suddenly let loose from its confining banks to spread in swamps and marshes over society and finally lose itself in the sands of secularity.

The specific form of monasticism which emerged in separation from the world, and in a measure even from the Church as a society, first appeared in Egypt. It is doubtful whether floating traditions of Indian customs had anything directly to do with its rise, although there are remarkable coincidences of habit. The Therapeutæ—if Mr. Conybeare's vindication of Philo's description of them[1] is accepted as satisfactory—were singularly similar fore-

[1] *De Vita Cont.* 5.

runners of the Christian monks. But it is more likely that similar causes led to similar effects than that in either case there was direct imitation. Alexandria was a centre of highly artificial civilisation; the desert was close at hand for those who desired to escape from the corrupting influences of city life. The country that had Therapeutæ before the Church appeared, and later dervishes under the Mohammedan régime, might naturally invite to similar practices in Christian times. We need not always assign the most strenuous motives to this movement. Doubtless there have always been men and women drawn to solitude by its own fascination, like Thoreau in his Walden; there have always been lovers of nature who preferred the country to the town.

Fresh light has been recently thrown on the lives and manners of the early Christian ascetics, especially in Egypt, by the publication of *The Lausiac History of Palladius*, a series of biographical sketches of monks, many of whom the writer had known personally, with some of whom he had shared their cells for a time, while he obtained information about others from reports of their disciples. Palladius was born in Galatia in the year 367; he visited the Egyptian ascetics in 388, spending three years among them. All this was in his youth. Subsequently he visited ascetics in other parts, and he wrote his book in the year 420.[1]

The earliest fugitives to the Egyptian desert simply retired before persecution without any ascetic design.[2] The first of the actual hermits is said to have been Paul, who lived in a cave near the Red Sea and was

[1] It was dedicated to Lausus, a chamberlain at the court of Theodosius II. Hence the name by which it is now known. Its amazing stories have led to its being regarded by some—especially Weingarten and Lucius—as a pure fabrication. But Dom Cuthbert Butler has vindicated its genuineness. The whole question of monkish marvels must be determined with regard to many considerations of hypnotism, telepathy, the sub-conscious ego, inaccuracy of observation, curious ideas as to the obligation of truth. We cannot doubt the genuineness of the life of St. Martin of Tours by Sulpicius Severus; yet that book offers us miracles galore.

[2] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* vi. 42.

visited a short time before his death by St. Anthony.[1] Jerome calls him "the founder of the monastic life";[2] but he is rather a shadowy personality, although we really have no reason to deny his existence. Much more important is the great Anthony himself. Keen controversy has raged as to the genuineness of the famous life of Anthony ascribed to Athanasius. It has been urged that the extravagances, the puerilities, the absurd miracles of this story are utterly unworthy of the champion of the Nicene faith, and could not have issued from the pen that wrote the well-known treatises contained in his acknowledged works. But now we have equally extravagant and seemingly impossible things said of other anchorites by Palladius, and he vouches for some of his most marvellous stories as a personal friend who in some cases had shared for months the cells of the men concerning whom he narrates them.[3] Athanasius calls Anthony "the founder of asceticism." There were anchorites when he took up a similar life, but living in huts[4] which they had built themselves near the towns. Born in the year 250, he received his call at the age of eighteen in the words of Christ to the young ruler which he once heard in church. He spent fifteen years in a hut near his native village; after which he shut himself up in one of those rock tombs that are so abundant in Egypt.[5] After this he lived in close seclusion in a ruined castle, and blocked up the entrance with a huge stone. His final place of abode was at a still more remote spot by the Dead Sea, where he died at the age of 105, ministered to in his extreme old age by his faithful

[1] Jerome, *Vita Pauli*; Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.* i. 13.

[2] *Auctor vitæ monasticæ; princeps vitæ monasticæ.*

[3] The genuineness of Athanasius' *Vita Antonii* is defended by Preuschen, Stülcken, Bardenhewer, Holl, Völter, Leipoldt, Grützmacher, Dom Butler, *Text and Studies*, vol. vi. No. 2; *Texte v. Unterschungen*, N.F. iv. 4, 79.

[4] Called *μοναστηρία*.

[5] The present writer was invited by a friend who was conducting exploration work in Egypt to "spend a night with him in his tomb; there would be plenty of sand." Such a retreat is not altogether devoid of comfort, being warm at night and cool during the day.

disciples Amathas and Macarius. During this long life of asceticism Anthony had won a fame which made his example a model for multitudes who now entered on the life of anchorites. At times of critical importance he would leave his retreat and appear in the city of Alexandria to preach to the people with immense effect, being received as a most venerated counsellor. He practised the exorcism of his times, fully believing in it. In the Arian controversy he was a staunch supporter of the Nicene position, and he did Athanasius good service by bringing the weight of his saintly reputation to bear on that side of the question. Altogether he is described as a man gifted with brain power and able to persuade men with forcible arguments. When dying he bequeathed his sheepskin to Athanasius, who received it as the most precious legacy.

Women as well as men were caught by the fascination of the ascetic life. In some cases they had personal reasons for adopting it. Thus Palladius tells the story of the maiden Alexandria, who shut herself up for ten years in such complete seclusion that even her attendant could not see her face. She told this attendant that she was never idle, for she spent her time in prayer, reciting the psalms, and weaving linen. Asked why she chose to live in this way, she said that it was in order to escape from the importunities of a lover. Among the most curious anchorites were the Stylites, men who lived on the summits of pillars. The practice originated in the fifth century with Simeon, who was born at Sisan, a village on the borders of Syria and Cilicia. He went through a succession of self-imposed austerities, living for a summer buried up to his neck in a garden; then in a dark cave with a spiked girdle round his waist; later on in a cell near Antioch where a number of admirers gathered about him. In the year 423 he built a low pillar, lived on that for a time, then on a higher pillar, and so on till he was raised 40 cubits above the earth, either in a hut, or, as seems more probable, merely on a railed platform. There he

spent thirty years—the wonder of the world. Crowds of Arabians and Armenians, and even pilgrims from as far as Spain and Britain, flocked thither to see the holy man and obtain his blessing. Simeon preached to them from his lofty pulpit, and thus became one of the most potent religious influences of his age. Others followed his example, especially in Syria and Greece. The eccentricity was not adopted in Egypt and it was disapproved of in the Western Church.

4. Meanwhile the fourth stage of the ascetic life was well advanced. This is known as the cœnobite. It is the common life, the life of a community. The contrast with the hermit life is very marked. The ancient anchorite sought absolute solitude, chose his own course, lived as he thought fit a very self-contained life. The monk in a convent was to sink self in the common life, pursue no self-willed aims, obey the authority under which he was put. Of the three monastic vows that dominated monasticism throughout the Middle Ages—poverty, chastity, obedience—the first two only were observed by the primitive anchorites; the third came in with the cœnobite life. A movement in this direction was originated by the gathering of admiring disciples round the cell of some famous anchorite. When these men had their own cells they were set well apart out of earshot of one another. Still, here we see an approach to the idea of a grouping of monks together. Sometimes a group of hermits would meet for the communion in an ordinary church if such a place happened to be within reach. But the definite founding of the cœnobite system is ascribed to Pachomius, who established his first monastery at Tabenniti near Denderah, about the year 305. The idea spread rapidly, and by the time of the death of Pachomius in or near the year 345 there were eight monasteries and several hundreds of monks. It was a fully organised system from the first, with a superior, a system of visitation, and general chapters. A monastery consisted of a number of houses each containing some thirty or forty

monks. The rules were rigorous on the principles of a military system. Still there was room for variations of habit. Describing the monastery at Panopolis (*Akhmīm*), Palladius tells us that the tables were laid and that a meal was prepared at midday and at every successive hour till late in the evening, to suit the convenience of monks who fasted up to various times in the day. Yet some, he says, ate only every second day, some only every third day, some only every fifth day.

Palladius is full of strange stories of the Egyptian anchorites and monks, some of them too fantastic to be better than childish fables, yet most of them significant of some trait in the ascetic life. The fidelity with which he records the faults he discovered in his visits to the desert retreats must be set down to his credit for good faith. Macarius punished himself for killing a gnat in a moment of irritation by retiring to the Scetic marshes, and there spending six months in a state of nudity among the insects, till on his return he was only recognised by his voice, his skin being like an elephant's hide. To Valens of Palestine the devil once came in the appearance of Christ, with such flattery of speech that the poor man's head was turned, and he told his brethren the next day that he had no need to partake of the communion. "For," said he, "I have seen Christ Himself." He was put in irons for a twelvemonth, and thus effectually humbled and cured of his delusion—if such it was; but Sir Walter Scott's famous story of Colonel Gardiner reminds us that the incident is capable of a very different interpretation. Another story of a similar character does not look quite so innocent. One night, as Palladius tells us, the devil came to Eucarpus, who had spent fifteen years in the ascetic life, speaking to nobody, and said, "I am Christ." The monk believed, and fell down and worshipped his vision. The intoxication of this scene encouraged the poor man to insubordination, so that he called Macarius "a painted image" and Evagrius "a mere hewer of words." He too was put in irons for a year, after which he only

lived thirteen months, ministering to the sick and washing the feet of strangers. Stephen lost all desire for meat and treated with contempt those who when out of health took milk or cooked flesh. His pride had a terrible fall. Resenting the authority of Macarius, he ran off to Alexandria, and there plunged into gluttony, drunkenness, and debauchery.

5. The last stage in the development of Eastern monasticism is due to the statesmanlike wisdom and energy of the great Basil, who may be regarded as the Benedict of the Oriental Church. The arrangements made by Pachomius applied only to his own monks. By far the larger number of the ascetics were living according to their private lights, and even where there were monasteries these were very variously administered. Basil travelled widely, visiting many of these institutions and discovering their objectionable features. Two practices in particular he held to be very mischievous. The first was the hermit habit. Solitude he thought dangerous to humility and charity. "Whose feet wilt thou wash?" he asks; "whom wilt thou serve? how canst thou be last of all—if thou art alone?" The second of these evils was idleness. Basil's rule insists on industry. At the same time he puts restraint on the wild extravagances of asceticism. A man of ascetic habits himself—with his one daily meal of beans—he writes, "If fasting hinders you from labour, it is better to eat like the workman of Christ that you are." The monk can possess no private property, meet no woman, drink no wine, read only canonical books. The true ascetic uses the dry and least nourishing food and eats but once a day.[1] There is to be reading during the meals.[2] Basil's pride and masterfulness should not be allowed to blind us to his careful, considerate kindness. He studied the welfare of the monks, relaxed their more severe exercises, but braced them for regular, wholesome work. Lofty-minded himself, he seeks to kindle a fine flame of enthusiasm in others. Thus he exclaims,

[1] *Const. Monast.* cap. vi. [2] *Reg. bref. tract.* Interr. 186.

"Athletes, workmen of Jesus Christ, you have engaged yourselves to fight for Him all the day, to bear all its heat. Seek not repose before the end; wait for the evening, that is to say, the end of life, the hour at which the householder shall come to reckon with you and pay your wages."

DIVISION II

THE MOHAMMEDAN PERIOD

CHAPTER I

THE RISE AND SPREAD OF MOHAMMEDANISM

(*a*) Sale's *Koran*. Original authorities; traditions collected by Zohri, Musa ibn Ochba and Abn Mashar; followed by Ibn Ishæ, Ibn Hisham, Wakidy, Tabari, Ibn Athir, whose works are extant more or less in their original state; Michael the Syrian (edit. and French trans. by Chabot, 1899–1907).

(*b*) Muir, *Life of Mahomet*, 3rd ed. 1894; *The Caliphate, Its Rise, Decline, and Fall*, 3rd ed. 1898; R. Bosworth Smith, *Lectures on Mohammedanism*, 2nd ed. 1876; Butler, *Arab Conquest of Egypt*, 1902; Sprenger, *Das Leben und die Lehre Mohammad*, 1869; Weil, *Einleitung in den Koran*, 2nd ed. 1878.

OUR familiar Western divison of Church History into three periods—the Patristic, the Mediæval, and the Modern—does not rightly apply to the Eastern half of Christendom. There were no Middle Ages in the Oriental Churches, for the simple reason that there was no Renaissance or Reformation to inaugurate a third period from which those ages could be sharply divided—no *terminus ad quem*. Nevertheless, other events roughly mark off a corresponding block of time. In the West the chief cause of the immense change that broke the classic traditions of the past and introduced mediævalism was the Teutonic flood of colonisation, before which half the Roman Empire crumbled away, and which ultimately issued in the shaping of the nations

of Europe. About the same time the tempest of Mohammedanism arose in Arabia to sweep over some of the fairest provinces of the Eastern branch of the empire, tearing them off limb by limb, and leaving only a truncated torso to represent the dominion of the Cæsars.

This happened in the seventh century, just after the last of the Latin Fathers, Gregory, had laid the foundations of mediæval theology. But the two invasions — the Teutonic in the West and the Arabian in the East—were very different in character. They agreed in one lamentable feature. In both cases a more barbarous race came to wreck and destroy an ancient civilisation. They also agreed in one redeeming characteristic. Each, appearing as the besom of destruction, was really an instrument of judgment on an age already perishing in its own corruption. While the Germans brought physical and moral health from their remote forests to the effete city-life of Italy, the Arabs came with the simplicity of the desert to castigate the effeminacy of Oriental luxury—until in a very short time they themselves fell victims to the same fatal narcotic. But there was this radical difference between the two immigrations. The Goths were Christians, and as they settled down among the conquered peoples, intermingling with them, if the unfortunate accident of their Arianism had not stood in the way they would have fraternised from the first with the churches of their adopted land. But the Arabs appeared as missionaries of a new religion, who held themselves aloof from the peoples they subdued in proud scorn—except in the one significant fact, that they wedded the wives and daughters of their victims. Liberal and lenient at first towards all who submitted to their yoke, they soon made it apparent that Jews and especially Christians were only allowed to practise the rites of their faiths under sufferance, and that with increasingly galling restrictions. From the seventh century onwards right down to our own day the chief factor of Church politics in the East has been its relation to Mohammedanism.

Mohammed was born at the city of Mecca in the year 570; but he was brought up in the tents of the Bedouins, from whom he learnt simple manners and among whom he maintained a primitive purity of life. He was forty years of age before he was conscious of the first impulse to his mission. Then the great thought of One God, Creator and Ruler of All, dawned upon his mind as a revelation. Mohammedanism has been traced to Jewish and Christian sources combined with Arabian traditions. There can be no doubt that both the rival Monotheistic faiths indirectly affected the prophet. We meet with references to them in the Koran; and Bible characters and Hebrew legends have had a considerable part in its composition. But while we may recognise these materials as fuel for the sacrifice, we cannot discover in them the fire. It was the personality of Mohammed, his vision of truth gained through deep brooding and struggling of soul, that constituted him the founder of Islam. There can be no question of his sincerity at the beginning of his career, nor of the purity of his original motives; it is equally clear that he deteriorated in his later days, became at least a self-deceiver, fell into self-indulgent vices, and justified them with supposed visions and voices from heaven. The burden of his message was a stern protest against the prevalent idolatry of Arabia, and his enunciation of the unity, the spirituality, the supremacy of God as at once almighty and most merciful. The Mussulman cry — "Allah Akbar! — God is Great!" — is the root principle of Mohammedanism. The sublime truth burst on the desert like a revelation. Undoubtedly it introduced a purer faith than the gross heathenism that it supplanted.

This clear, vigorous new teaching braced the minds of its adherents with belief in an inflexible fixture of events which was not mere fatalism, as is commonly asserted, but the idea of a personal purpose in the dominant will of the merciful Allah. Further, with this creed was conjoined the doctrine of the equality of all male believers,

involving the duty of brotherly-kindness. Then the prohibition of wine was one sign that Mohammed aimed at moral vigour and simplicity of life. On the other hand, the most fatal defect of Mohammedanism is its permission of polygamy and concubinage, which together with the veil involves the degradation of woman and her separation from the duties and interests of the world. This, as Sir William Muir points out, is more hurtful to men than to women. Lastly, under the rule of Islam, slavery also is sanctioned and largely practised.

The tolerance of the early caliphs has been frequently applauded. But in its essential nature the Mussulman faith is dogmatic and intolerant. The Koran, which its founder claimed to have received by dictation from heaven, is to be taken as infallible. Thus thought is paralysed and all religions but that of Islam are treated with contempt. As a consequence, cruelty to the unbeliever and especially the apostate—that is to say, the convert to Christianity—has been frequently permitted, and that with ruthless fanaticism.

Mohammed must have had real faith in his message to bear him through the early period of discouragement when his converts were but few. At that time they could only be won by persuasion in face of popular disfavour, and at length it was necessary for the prophet to escape from Mecca, a hunted fugitive. The Hegira—the flight to Medina—took place in the year 622, which afterwards became the starting-point of the Mohammedan era.

In the second stage of his enterprise Mohammed sanctioned the sword for the rooting out of idolatry and the spread of the faith. By thus following up preaching with force, he had secured most of Arabia at the time of his death (A.D. 632). But there is no proof that he had ever contemplated crossing the borders of his own land. With Mohammed Islam was the religion of the Arab.

While the death of the prophet produced consternation among his followers, it was the occasion of insurrection on

the part of the conquered tribes of the desert. The crisis was acute; but among the "companions" were men equal to its demands. When Omar was passionately haranguing the people who crowded the mosque at Medina, the calm Abu Bekr put him aside with the memorable words: "Whoso worshippeth Mohammed let him know that Mohammed is dead; but whoso worshippeth God, let him know that God liveth and dieth not." Abu Bekr, then sixty years of age, was elected first caliph—i.e. *successor* to the prophet. He had a heavy task before him in the subjugation of the apostate tribes, but the work was triumphantly accomplished by his great general Khalid. In the conduct of this war and the behaviour of its leader we may discover the secret of the success of Islam and its marvellous career during the next few years. Everywhere the terms were submission or the sword. While idolatry was to be rooted out completely, for Jews and Christians submission might take the form of tribute. But all Arabs who accepted Islam were at once enrolled in the army and endowed with its privileges. Under the early caliphs there was very little for the civil administrators to do beyond collecting and distributing tribute and booty. These caliphs were anxious to prevent their people building houses or engaging in agriculture lest the settled life should chill their martial ardour. Thus all Islam was an armed camp, and the chief service of religion was to fight for it. In the conduct of war all who resisted were slaughtered, and their property, their wives, and their daughters confiscated. One-fifth of the booty was reserved for the treasury, but immediately distributed among the faithful after the small expenses of administration were paid; the remaining four-fifths were divided in equal proportions among the men who had engaged in the fight. The same was done with the women captives. It was accounted a scandal that Khalid once married the wife of an opposing leader on the battlefield, and the caliph rebuked him for his indecent haste. Nevertheless he retained his post and acted very similarly another time.

If an Arab fell while fighting for Islam, he was to expect two bright-eyed damsels to descend from heaven, wipe the dust and sweat from his face, and carry him away to a voluptuous paradise. Thus the reward of fighting was in any case a harem—if the warrior survived, a harem on earth; if he died, a harem in paradise. This was the precise opposite of the Christian ideal preached by the priests and professed by the monks. Celibacy with chastisement of the flesh was the stern Church conception of the saint; gross sensuality in multiple marriage was held out as the bait for the Mohammedan warrior. A more sharp antithesis between two ideals of life was never conceived.

Nevertheless this is only one side of the shield. We should do deep injustice to Islam and at the same time flatter Christendom hypocritically if we refused to sternly face the other side. The Mohammedan sincerely believed that he was an instrument in the hand of Allah; he was sure that it was Allah's will for the infidel to be smitten down on refusing submission, and for the faith of the prophet to be maintained and spread at the point of the sword. Thus he was fired with the zeal of the missionary. Under these circumstances we can only admire the comparative tolerance of the early caliphs and their readiness to protect Jews and Christians on the simple condition of the payment of tribute. Now look at the state of the Christian world at this crisis. The Church was torn with internal factions. The strength of its best minds was given to the discussion of the most difficult points of dogma. On account of heresy in regard to these remote abstractions whole provinces were driven by persecution to disaffection. At the same time the morals of the empire were abominably corrupt. The saintly ideal of the monks—not always realised by its own professors—left the mass of the people, who frankly confessed that they could not attain to it, all the more ready to abandon any strenuous endeavours after virtue. City life was sinking into the slough of luxurious self-indulgence; and the government was feeble and only spasmodically energetic by fits and starts.

Although after the death of the prophet Islam had first to fight for its very existence, and although it was only by desperate courage and energy that the revolting tribes were reduced to sullen submission, Mohammedanism had this singular power that it could cast a spell over its reluctant converts and convert them into fervent disciples. Moreover, when it spread beyond the borders of Arabia a new inducement was added to encourage loyalty. The Arabs became an aristocratic order with distinctive privileges, and although the equal brotherhood of all believers was preached in the Koran it was never practised as between the army from Arabia and the Syrians, Persians, Copts, in other countries. Apparently Mohammed had not contemplated its extension to alien races. Therefore the brotherhood of Islam was really the union of the Bedouin of the desert in equality of privilege and community of mutual service. The rule that required all the children of the faithful, whether from wives or concubines, to be brought up as Mohammedans with the full status of their fathers, led to the rapid growth of the army of Islam and its continual infusion with the renewing vigour of fresh blood. So this conquering host poured out spreading death and terror, always gathering spoil, and often exacting tribute.

When it looked beyond the borders of Arabia Mohammedanism found itself confronted by two great empires—Persia in the East and Rome in the North and West. United these two powers could easily have nipped the new terror in the bud. Even separately under normal circumstances either of them should have been more than a match for it. But at this most momentous juncture their century long enmity, which had sometimes slumbered for generations, had broken out into deadly feud.

A few years before the appearance of the new and totally unexpected danger, Chosroes the king of Persia had effected a successful invasion of the Roman Empire, first penetrating to Palestine and seizing Jerusalem. That city of unparalleled misfortunes was then given up to outrage and plundering, during which time thousands of monks,

nuns, and priests were slaughtered. Fire followed pillage. The church of the Holy Sepulchre and other churches were partially or wholly wrecked. From Palestine the victor advanced to Egypt, and seized Alexandria amid similar scenes of slaughter and outrage (A.D. 618).

At length Sergius the patriarch of Constantinople roused the Emperor Heraclius to a tremendous effort for the recovery of his lost territory and Jerusalem in particular. The tide now turned. Victory after victory attended the Byzantine arms. A great point was made of the fact that the Cross in its reliquary was recovered and restored to the altar at the Holy Sepulchre. Thus this was in a way a war for religion, a crusade of the Eastern Empire. But no sooner was the great feat of his life achieved than Heraclius began to live at ease, till he sank into enervating self-indulgence among the lavish luxuries of life at Constantinople.

The Roman emperor's success in the Persian war led him to underrate the new danger already looming on the southern horizon. Besides, when the conflict with Islam began in deadly earnest the imperial troops were divided among themselves, half-hearted, and so reluctant to fight—if we may credit the Arab chronicler—that in some cases they were dragged forward chained together. Such an army had little chance against the hardy desert veterans, dashing into battle aflame with fanaticism. Modern science has armed the civilised nations with weapons that are practically irresistible by barbarous races. But before the invention of gunpowder, civilisation and barbarism were more on a level in military resources.

Chaldæa and Southern Syria were in close touch with Arabia, and naturally these were the first districts to be overrun by the advancing tide. At Hira the Arabs came upon a monastery outside the city walls, and the defenceless monks, exposed to the full fury of their attack, and seeing no alternative to submission, acted as intermediaries and arranged terms of surrender between the invaders and the besieged inhabitants (A.D. 633). The Christians in this city retained their faith and were found to be true to it

several centuries later, in spite of their subjection to a Mohammedan government.

It was in Syria that the Arabs came into contact with the Roman Empire. At first the forces of the invaders were paralysed by the confusion and jealousies of separate commands. Then Abu Bekr fetched the great General Khalid from Mesopotamia to put fresh vigour into the attack. Under his leadership a terrible battle was fought close to the Yermuk, one of the eastern tributaries of the Jordan, which resulted in a rout of the Romans (1st of September, A.D. 634). The Arab chronicler states that the beaten imperial troops were "toppled over the bank even as a wall is toppled over," and adds that over 100,000 men were lost in the chasm. The Byzantine chroniclers are discreetly silent with reference to these disasters of the empire. But after making every allowance for the Oriental habit of exaggeration, we can see that the defeat must have been complete. This astonishing event struck terror into the court at Constantinople. For a time it paralysed the opposition of the empire to the daring invasion of one of the fairest of its provinces. What was thus lost was never again permanently recovered.

The same year Abu Bekr died. He had lived in extreme simplicity—a marked contrast to the luxury and splendour of the courts of the emperor and the great king. When the treasury at Medina was opened only a single gold piece fell out of the bags. Although much wealth was now pouring in from tribute, "all shared alike, recent convert and veteran, male and female, bond and free." Abu Bekr was succeeded by his friend and counsellor, the passionate, energetic Omar, now mellowed with age, who as the second caliph proved at least an equally capable ruler. Thus to its other advantages over the corrupt and decrepit empire Islam added consummate ability in its early leaders.

The next year (A.D. 635) Damascus was stormed, but the city capitulated just in time to save the lives of its inhabitants. Half of the property of the place was seized, and,

in addition to the taxes raised under the empire, a tribute of one piece of gold was imposed on every male adult who did not embrace Islam, and a measure of corn was taken from every field. This became the model for the treatment of Christians elsewhere. The churches were equally distributed between Christians and Mohammedans. The great cathedral of St. John the Baptist was at first divided in two, one half serving for each religion; and so it remained for eighty years, after which time the Christians were ejected and it became wholly a mosque. But down to our day—even in spite of a recent fire—the visitor can read over its chief entrance the Psalmist's magnificent words—

"THY KINGDOM, O CHRIST, IS AN EVERLASTING KINGDOM;
AND THY DOMINION IS FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION."[1]

The next step was to carry the war with Persia to a conclusion. This was now prosecuted with the utmost vigour till the capital Medain fell into the hands of the invaders. On account of the unhealthiness of its site for men accustomed to the pure air of the desert, they removed the centre of government to two new places which rapidly grew into the important cities of Kufa and Bussorah.

Meanwhile the movement in Syria was advancing. Heraclius retired to Roha (Edessa), and the Arabs under Khalid defeated the Byzantine forces at Chalcis, and then advanced on Aleppo, which they seized. A battle was fought in the woods near Antioch, and this too went against the Greeks, who were driven back to the city, which was then invested. It soon capitulated. Thus the great, rich capital of Syria, the centre of Christianity in the province, fell into the hands of the Mohammedans. The Bedouin Christians of Syria, who had never been very fervent in their faith, for the most part went over to Islam; but the inhabitants of the cities remained true. These people were treated with moderation; their churches were

[1] Η ΒΑCΙΛΕΙΑ· COΥ ΧΕ ΒΑCΙΛΕΙΑ· ΠΑΝΤΩΝ· ΤΩΝ ΑΙΟΝΩΝ· ΚΑΙ· Η· ΔΕCΠΟΤΕΙΑ· COΥ· ΕΝ· ΠΑCΗ· ΓΕΝΕΑΙ· ΚΑΙ ΓΕΝΕΑΙ.

not taken from them, and public Christian worship was permitted. Heraclius now retreated to Constantinople, admitting sadly that the valuable province of Syria was lost to the empire.

Palestine was next invaded by armies under Amr' and Shorahbîl. At Jerusalem the patriarch Sophronius, as the representative of the people, sued for peace. Omar attached so much importance to the possession of the sacred city that he travelled to Jabia—the first journey of a caliph out of Arabia—and there met a deputation from the patriarch, with whom he arranged terms of capitulation (A.D. 636). Then he went up to Jerusalem and received Sophronius and the citizens in a kindly manner, imposing a light tribute and permitting the continued possession and use of all the churches and shrines by the Christians. This event is of great importance in view of subsequent history. When we come to the time of the Crusaders and observe the fanatical fury they exhibited while rescuing the holy sites from the hands of the infidel, it will be well to recollect that the city had been transferred to the Mohammedans without any resistance by the action of the Christian patriarch. Thus Sophronius carried out under new circumstances the same policy that Jeremiah had urged in vain upon his infatuated contemporaries when an earlier invasion from the East was coming up with a force that made resistance hopeless. Much happened between the peaceful surrender of the city in the seventh century to the courteous and reasonable Omar and the wrongs and sufferings that provoked the Crusades five hundred years later. The so-called Ordinance of Omar attributes to the great caliph a number of humiliating exactions for which he was not responsible and which represent the accretions of succeeding years of despotism. When the caliphate was established at Damascus and Bagdad, the simple requirement of tribute was not deemed enough to stamp the inferiority of the Christians. They were to become marked men and women by wearing yellow stripes in their dress; they were forbidden to ride on horseback; if riding an ass or a mule it must be with

wooden stirrups and saddle knobs; their graves were to be level with the ground; their children were prohibited the instruction of Moslem masters; no high office was to be entrusted to them; no new churches were to be erected; no cross was to remain outside a church; no bells were to be rung; no processions were to be permitted at Easter or any festal occasion; the Mohammedans were to be allowed free access to the holy sites. Worse was done apart from any ordinances; but these recognised rules were sufficient to set a badge of inferiority on the Christians and restrain the demonstration of their religion. Perhaps, however, when we consider the intolerance practised between the several parties in the Church one against another, often amounting to serious persecution and sometimes breaking out into bloodshed, we may still respect and honour the comparative liberality and patience of their Mohammedan masters.

Arabia, however, presents an exception to this policy of comparative tolerance. This was *par excellence* the land of Islam. Mohammed had said, "In Arabia there shall be no faith but the faith of Islam." Accordingly an ancient body of Christians in the province of Najran was driven into exile. Some settled in Syria, others near Kufa, both parties, it will be observed, still under the Mohammedan government.

In the year 340 Amr' invaded Egypt. Approaching the country in a south-westerly direction, he first subdued Upper Egypt and thence descended on Alexandria. During the siege Heraclius died; the Greek naval troops took to their ships and fled; and the weakened garrison found it necessary to capitulate. This saved the city from destruction; its Christian inhabitants like the Copts elsewhere were treated leniently and merely put under tribute. Nevertheless, here was another limb torn from the Roman Empire in the East. First Syria, next Egypt, two of the most important provinces, had fallen into the hands of the Arabs. The two great patriarchates of Antioch and Alexandria now came under the yoke of the Mohammedan government.

The case of Egypt is peculiarly important for the glaring proofs it affords of the suicidal policy of the Church and State in preparing for the final collapse of the power of both in this province. Chosroes had done great mischief in his invasion; but this came and went, while the oppression of the imperial government was almost more intolerable, because it was continuous. As Monophysites the Copts were disowned by the Church and persecuted by the State. In comparison with the Byzantine intolerance the yoke of the Mohammedan government seemed easy. To these ill-treated Copts the invader came as a deliverer. It was the policy of the Arabs to favour the schismatics and heretics among the Christians in order to weaken the empire's power of resistance. These people have been accused of directly aiding the infidels. While it cannot be denied that in some cases they did so, the wholesale charges brought against them by their opponents go beyond verifiable facts. All down the course of history we have to be on our guard against the libels perpetrated against heretics by the narrow-minded, passionate champions of orthodoxy. But for the purposes of an invader mere passivity and non-resistance would be almost as serviceable as direct assistance. There was no question of patriotism. From time immemorial the Egyptians had lived under tyrannical masters, and certainly they had little reason to cultivate a sentiment of loyalty to the Greek despot at Constantinople who lent his forces to aid the Church of the empire in punishing them for what they regarded as their higher loyalty—their loyalty to Christ and truth.

Thus it came about that the Nestorians in Syria and the Jacobites in Egypt—both out of favour with the Greek government, because out of communion with the Greek Church—found rest and protection under the ægis of Islam. This fact needs to be grasped in all its wide-reaching significance if we would account for the success of the Mohammedan movement. But even at first the rest was often disturbed and the protection accompanied by irksome conditions, and it was not long before the mild sway of the

early caliphs was followed by the harsh and cruel tyranny of their degenerate successors. Meanwhile the mischief was done. The empire had lost its provinces; the Church was divided and insuperable barriers were raised against reunion.

Further, when we consider that, while theological rancour ruled among the clergy, relic and image worship was the most popular form of religion among the laity, we can understand how the Mohammedan gained ground by presenting to the world what on the face of it was a purer faith. The wonder is that most of the Christians remained true to their religion. No doubt there was much genuine piety among the people of which history—chiefly concerned with the quarrels of the clergy—does not condescend to take account. That was the saving salt. We come across pleasing instances of friendships between liberal-minded caliphs and Christian scholars. Mohammedanism had its lessons to teach Christendom. Lastly, the iconoclastic controversy, which became the next disturbing movement in Eastern Christendom, can be traced in a measure to the influence of Islam. It was Mohammed's war against idols carried over into the Church.

CHAPTER II

BYZANTINE ART

(*a*) Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* x. 4; *Vit. Const.* iii. 48, 50; Procopius, *de Ædificiis Justiniani*, i. 1–3; Evagrius, *Hist. Eccl.* iv. 31.

(*b*) Fergusson, *Handbook of Architecture*, 1859; de Vogüé, *Eglises de la Terre Sainte*, 1860; Hübsch, *Alt. Christ. Kirchen*, 1862; Smith, *Dict. Christ. Antiq.*, Articles: "Church," "Image," "Jesus Christ, Representations of"; Mrs. Jameson and Lady Eastlake, *Hist. of our Lord . . . in Works of Art*, 1864; Bayet, *l'Art Byzantine*, 1883; Leclerq, *Manuel d'Archéologie Chrétienne*, 1907.

THE characteristics of Church life at this period are quite as clearly impressed upon its art as upon its literature. By studying the controversial writings of the time we may be able to gain some insight into the intellectual conditions of bishops and other leading theologians; but when we look at the churches, with their paintings and mosaics, many of which are still extant, or come to imagine what they are and were by means of plans, photographs, and descriptions, we are really brought much nearer to the actual lives of the men and women who constituted the mass of Christendom in these days of the Greek Empire. The iconoclastic controversy which broke out early in the eighth century has forced the attention of historians to one phase of this subject, and its importance cannot be weighed or its significance appreciated till we have before our minds' eye a vivid conception of the scenes amid which it moved. But more than that, we need to have some idea of the large place occupied by art in the Eastern Church in order to understand the life and character of the people who composed it. Dean Stanley pointed out that what music

is in the Western Church, pictures are in the Eastern. They express the colour, the emotion, even the passion of religion.

In considering this subject we will look first at the architecture of the churches, and then consider the pictorial art with which their walls were clothed.

Byzantine architecture is the only style of building that can be correctly denominated Christian architecture. We are accustomed to assign that title to the Gothic order; but neither its area, its age, nor its origin justify us in doing so. Our English cathedrals and the great churches of France are sometimes described as embodiments of the Christian idea, with its far-reaching mystery and its soaring aspiration. Those forests of clustered pillars and long vaulted aisles, like avenues in stone, the fine pointed arches, the "storied windows richly dight," the towers and spires and pinnacles, the quiet side-chapels, the sheltered cloisters —all contrast strongly with the ordered symmetry and clear daylight beauty of the self-contained, perfect Greek temples. Accordingly we have come to take them as expressive of the essential difference between the spirit of Christianity and the spirit of classical paganism. To be more accurate, we should say that this Gothic, as rich in colour when it was first produced as it was elaborate in form, really represents only the mediæval mind and life of north-west Europe. It is Anglo-Saxon and Frankish. We meet with little of it in southern Europe. In Italy the Roman and Romanesque styles persisted till they blossomed into the Renaiscent. We have Gothic architecture in northern Italy, in Tuscany, and to a small extent even in Rome, but only as an exotic, a temporary, alien visitor. Its most glorious product, Giotto's Campanile at Florence, that work of jewellery in architecture, with its straight lines and right angles, and its horizontal summit, has many traces of the persistence of the Romanesque about it. Moreover, it must be admittted that on the whole St. Paolo outside the city of Rome represents more truly the earlier period of the Christian architecture of south Europe and St. Peter's the later.

Then, if we turn to the measurement of time, the limited range of the Gothic art will be equally apparent. It rose in the twelfth century and it declined in the sixteenth; it did not flourish in full vigour for more than three or four hundred years. Even in the north it was preceded by the Romanesque, especially in the type commonly called Norman, and it was followed by Renaiscent. In England the great Durham nave and many another cathedral and church structure of the twelfth century and earlier bear witness against the unique claim of the pointed arch to represent antiquity, and St. Paul's Cathedral is the plainest proof of its transience. Christianity is nearly two thousand years old; the reign of Gothic architecture lasted less than one-fifth of this time.

The third point concerns the question of origin. Fanciful theories about the Gothic symbolism must give place to sober conceptions of a very different kind when we trace the early English and the corresponding Continental styles to their origins. Then it is seen that the pointed arch did not arise from a contemplation of the effect produced by the crossing of round arches in mural decoration—as at Norwich and many other places. Structurally, it came from the desire to improve on the Roman barrel-shaped vault—to strengthen it by raising its centre, so as to adapt it to the sloping roof by bringing the top of the vault nearer to the ridge of the roof, and at the same time to admit of the adjustment of transverse vaulting for transepts, chapels, and windows. The pointed window naturally followed the pointed vault above it. No doubt northern requirements helped the evolution of certain Gothic features. The steep roof would be useful for throwing off snow; the large window would be good for light in a dull and cloudy climate. This would admit of tracery, and when stained glass was introduced it would be desirable for it to become larger still. Then in turn the great windows, by weakening the walls, would concentrate the weight and thrust on what remained so as to necessitate the support

of buttresses, considered by some[1] to be the essential note of Gothic architecture, its one invariably characteristic feature. Thus we have the system of balance, thrust and counter-thrust, and ultimately the skilful adjustment of points of support and resistance to the total elimination of constructive walls, as at Sainte Chapelle in Paris, at Beauvais, and at Amiens. All this no doubt is a western and northern development taking place within Christendom. Still it is not exclusively religious architecture. We have some of the finest specimens of Gothic in the cloth halls and town halls of Ypres and Bruges, Louvain and Brussels. The pointed arch is an importation from the East, where it was used centuries before it appeared in the West. There, however, it was not Christian in origin or usage, but Saracenic. It is no mere coincidence, therefore, that it was adopted in Western Europe just after the Crusades, which had reopened communication with the East. At the same time this architecture was being directly developed by the Mohammedan invaders of Sicily and by the Moors in Spain.

Now let us turn to Byzantine architecture. This has dominated Eastern Christendom from the sixth century to our own age. For fourteen hundred years it has been the one system followed by the Oriental half of Christendom. From the first it was conterminous with the Byzantine Empire, and therefore it has extended as far as Ravenna in Italy, the capital of the Exarchate, and given us one of its most magnificent products in St. Mark's at Venice. Further, this architecture is not only spread over a much larger area and found to be flourishing for a much longer period than the Gothic; unlike that system, it can claim a purely Christian origin. It was developed on Christian soil and to serve Christian purposes. From the first it was essentially Church architecture. It is the one style of building that has been evolved for the express purpose of meeting the requirements of Christian worship as this is practised in the Greek Church. Gothic, as illustrated

[1] *e.g.* Bond, *Gothic Architecture.*

in our cathedrals, is a northern adaptation of ideas, in themselves independent of the Church, to the requirements of mediæval Catholicism north of the Alps; Byzantine is the one style of architecture that can claim to be ecclesiastical both in its origin and in its intention.

Previous to the development of the Byzantine style, the church building was an adaptation of Roman architecture to Christian uses. At first meetings were held in rooms of houses, in a portico of the Jerusalem Temple, perhaps in hired halls.[1] The worship in the catacombs was organised simply because there the brethren could assemble at the tombs of the martyrs. Justin Martyr declares that the Christians are not dependent on sacred places for their meetings, as they can worship anywhere.[2] Still, as the numbers grew it became necessary to have buildings of sufficient size to hold large congregations. At the same time the Church began to acquire property in buildings. We come across an instance of this during the reign of Alexander Severus (A.D. 230) in Rome, and again under Aurelian at Antioch (A.D. 270–275), when the emperor was appealed to by the orthodox section of the Church to decide their right to take possession of the building at Antioch which Paul of Samosata had retained in defiance of deposition by a council, so long as he had enjoyed the patronage of Queen Zenobia. Aurelian granted it to those "with whom the Christian bishops of Italy and Rome were in correspondence."[3] By this time there must have been many important church buildings. The Diocletian persecution began with the destruction of the great church at Nicodemia, in accordance with an imperial edict for the general demolition of churches.[4] With the time of Constantine we come to the great age of church building, and now much more magnificent structures appear than those of the period before the

[1] *e.g.* Acts xix. 9—but this was for public discussion, not for Church worship.

[2] *Martyrdom of Justin and Others*, 2.

[3] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* vii. 27–30.

[4] *Ibid.* viii. 2.

imperial recognition of Christianity. The emperor himself was foremost in promoting the work, especially in his new city of Constantinople, but also at Jerusalem and Bethlehem.

The model for this church architecture was not the pagan temple, which was manifestly unsuitable for the purposes of public worship. The temple was the home of a god, not a place of assembly. Here priests sacrificed, and worshippers prayed, made vows, brought votive offerings. There were special festivals, and some temples were the scenes of the celebration of mysteries. None of these functions required the large assembly hall needed by a Christian congregation. Accordingly, although in a few cases, as with the Pantheon at Rome, a pagan temple came to be consecrated as a Christian Church, the Christians did not take the temple as the model for their place of worship. They found this in the basilica, or Hall of Justice, the Roman law court. In consequence the large churches have come to be called "basilicas." Eusebius gives us the earliest description of such a church in his account of the new building at Tyre, at the dedication of which an Arian council was summoned. It stood in a great open space enclosed by a wall, and was approached through a magnificent portico,[1] which led into a quadrangular atrium,[2] surrounded with interior porticoes, and having a fountain in the centre for washing the hands and feet, as we see now at Mohammedan mosques; beyond the atrium was the basilica proper,[3] a building roofed with cedar wood and having side aisles and galleries. There were chairs[4] for the bishop and his clergy round about the altar at the end of the church, fenced off from the rest of the nave with lattice work.[5] The Apostolical Constitutions knows of no such separation between the clergy and the laity, showing that this significant barrier must have been quite a recent innovation, for our present redaction of that work cannot be earlier than the fourth century. Yet we read in

[1] *πρόπυλον.* [2] *αἴθριον.* [3] *βασίλειος οἶκος.*
[4] *θρόνοι.* [5] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* x. 4.

it the following directions for the arrangement of a church :—

"And first, let the building be long, with its head to the east, with its vestries on both sides at the east end; and so it will be like a ship.[1] In the middle let the bishop's chair be placed, and on each side of him let the presbytery sit down; and let the deacons stand near at hand, in close and small girt garments, for they are like the mariners and managers of the ship: with regard to these, let the laity sit on the other side, with all quietness and good order. And let the women sit by themselves, they also keeping silence. In the middle let the reader stand upon some high place."[2]

This may be taken as the method followed down to the fourth century. The separation of the clergy from the laity by a screen tended to assimilate the Eucharist still more to the pagan mysteries, and to make it a sacrifice offered by the priest rather than a meal, participation in which by the people is its principal function. Although the Western Church adopted the full sacrificial idea it did not screen off the clergy as that was done in the Eastern Churches; it was content with a slight railing, leaving the officiating minister full in view. Here we have one of the most striking differences between Eastern and Western Churches.

From the time of Constantine to the age of Justinian the Roman style of basilica prevailed. In the sixth century the new order which we know as Byzantine appears, and the rise of it synchronises with the great impulse to church building that was given by the latter emperor. This development may be attributed in part to the influence of Persian architecture on the Greek branch of the empire.[3] But although the stimulus came from the Eastern neighbour, the system itself was a legitimate development of the preceding Roman style. That was not

[1] *ναός* = nave.

[2] *Apost. Const.* ii. 57.

[3] Fergusson regards Byzantine architecture as a combination of Roman and Sasanian. See *Handbook of Architecture*, p. 945.

an original style, nor was it true to any central idea. It was mainly a combination of the Roman arch with the Greek column and architrave. But the combination was really superfluous, for structurally the arch dispensed with the architrave. Accordingly the columns and architraves were relegated to the surface of the walls for decorative purposes. They were mere survivals, and Byzantine architecture dispensed with them altogether as superfluities, being content to have plainer exteriors, while the whole attention of the decorator was devoted to the elaborate adornment of the interior with gold, mosaic, and mural painting.

The Romans invented the dome and left the most magnificent specimen of that daring structure in the Pantheon; but they did not develop this original idea, seeing that they could only apply it to round buildings. Since they required length in their basilica they made use of the arch for its roof, simply prolonging this in the form of a barrel. Now the primary characteristic of Byzantine architecture is its development of the method of roofing with domes. The most perfect specimen of this work is the great church of St. Sophia at Constantinople, which it was the pride of Justinian to have built. Two earlier churches had been burnt—Constantine's church in A.D. 404, at the time of Chrysostom, and its successor in A.D. 532. Strictly speaking, Justinian's St. Sophia—still standing and now used as a mosque—is not typical Byzantine architecture. It is quite unique. Nothing of the kind had preceded it; it was never successfully imitated. Its famous architect, Anthemius, has the proud distinction of having produced a work without peer or parallel in all the ages of building. "St. Sophia," says M. Bayet, "has the double advantage of marking the advent of a new style and reaching at the same time such proportions as have never been surpassed in the East."[1] The most essential trait of this invention and its crowning

[1] *L'Art Byzantine*, p. 41. Cf. L. M. Phillips, "Santa Sophia" in *Contemporary Review*, No. 493, pp. 55–76.

glory is the adaptation of the dome, which hitherto had only appeared on round buildings, to a rectangular building by means of a series of lesser domes filling up the angle spaces and mounting one above another, till the great central dome soars over all, and the whole cluster looked at from beneath has the effect of cavernous vaults in a vastness of lofty space. The Byzantine architecture which followed also adapted the dome to rectilineal lines, sometimes by having the building beneath it octagonal, or by means of other devices, but never with any approach to the glory of St. Sophia.

While this structural triumph of genius is the chief peculiarity of St. Sophia, another feature of Justinian's basilica, being more easily imitated, has become a marked characteristic of Byzantine architecture. This is its wealth of decorative splendour. In the decoration of St. Sophia the richest materials—gold, silver, ivory, precious stones—were used with incredible prodigality. The great dome was constructed with white tiles from Rhodes, one-fifth the weight of ordinary tiles. Soon after it had been completed it was thrown down by an earthquake. It was rebuilt more strongly, and it has stood through nearly fourteen centuries till our own time. The ambo placed near the centre, made of most beautiful marbles and surmounted with a dome and cross of gold, consumed one year's Egyptian revenue. The choir was separated from the nave by a solid silver screen. The altar was of gold set with jewels beneath a gold dome and cross sustained by four silver columns. The interior surfaces of domes and walls were completely covered with immense mosaics, consisting of majestic figures, on a ground in some places of gold, in others of a deep blue colour; some of these however were later than the time of Justinian. At night, when the whole building was lit up with the scattered radiance of 6,000 candelabras, the effect must have been superb. Justinian appears to have been more proud of his basilica at Constantinople than of the conquests of his great general Belisarius,

which gave him back for a time the best part of the lost western half of the empire, or the codification of Roman law with which his name has become most familiarly associated in later history. Truth will not allow us to think that this work was executed solely for the glory of God. Very significant of the spirit in which all its splendour was produced is Justinian's famous explanation in contemplation of it: "I have beaten thee, Solomon."[1]

While in its peculiar glory of construction St. Sophia was never followed by subsequent builders, there is a church at Salonica that appears to be an imitation of it, and from the period of Justinian the Latin basilica form declines and we have churches with domes, plain exterior walls, and rich interior decoration of gold surfaces, mosaics, frescoes, and elaborate capitals—the best known of which is St. Mark's at Venice. Earlier Byzantine work is illustrated in the West at Ravenna and in Sicily. It is the prevalent style of Greek church architecture.

Manuscripts now began to imitate the architectural decorative style. The Laurentian monastery at Florence contains a Syriac MS. executed as early as A.D. 586, with beautiful Byzantine decorations on nearly every page.

At the same time sculpture declined. There were statues of emperors and bas-reliefs of religious scenes in the earlier period, but sculpture was rarely if ever used in the East for statues of Christ, the Virgin, or saints. This is a point in which the Eastern Church differs from the Western, where statuary is a marked feature of church decoration and comes into close connection with worship. There are no statues in Eastern churches. The iconoclastic dispute to which our attention will next be directed, though commonly described as concerned with "image worship," refers to pictures, the only kind of images worshipped in the Greek part of Christendom. There never was any Church decree to forbid the use of solid images. It appears to have been by a sort of tacit

[1] *Νενίκηκα σε Σολομών.*

understanding and mutual consent that they were ruled out. At first the horror of pagan idolatry was sufficient to preclude Christian idolatry. Subsequently, no doubt, the fierce Mohammedan war on idols would keep the Eastern Christians from following the example of their Western brethren for very shame. When the image worshippers were opposed by the Iconoclasts on the ground of idolatry, they could better defend their pictures than they could have defended statues which would have been very like the pagan idols. Sculpture was now only used for bas-reliefs on ambos and for other architectural decorative purposes. At Ravenna the human figure is neglected, and we have lambs, doves, peacocks, vases of water, monograms, crosses. A seventh century work at Venice represents the apostles as twelve lambs.

The religious veneration given to pictures never corresponds to their artistic merits. Some of the ugliest paintings have received the highest honours owing to their antiquity, their legendary origin, or the miraculous powers with which they have been credited. In the church of St. Sylvester at Rome there is the portrait of Christ said to have been sent to Abgarus of Edessa, given to the church of St. Sophia at Constantinople, and thence transferred to its present resting-place. Among the relics at the Vatican is the portrait, according to the legend, impressed on the handkerchief which St. Veronica lent to the Saviour on His way to the Cross. These two most precious of all pictures, regarded from the standpoint of the adoring worshipper, do not come into the region of Christian art. They belong to the fantastic category of relics. The earliest Christian art of which we have remains in the catacombs is entirely after the model of contemporary Greek and Roman painting. Its subjects are chiefly Biblical or allegorical—Daniel in the Lion's Den, the Good Shepherd, etc.; and its spirit is cheerful. During the days of persecution the Christians did not take pleasure in the contemplation of torture; nor did they then represent the ascetic type of face. Pictures of the Crucifixion come later, and so do representations of fasting

saints and suffering martyrs. The serene, youthful appearance of Jesus, sometimes symbolised by Orpheus, or modelled on the type of Apollo, gives place in the Byzantine period to the exalted Christ, the King on His throne, glorious, majestic, awful to approach. The walls of Byzantine churches were decorated in fresco or mosaic with illustrations of Old and New Testament history. The purpose of this was educational, in order that, as St. Nilus said, "Those who could not read the Scriptures could learn from the pictures the good actions of those who have served God faithfully." For the same reason scenes of martyrdom, which the early Christians had avoided, were now rendered with brutal realism. Originally the object in view was as innocent as our modern illustrated Bibles, school-room pictures, and mission-hall lantern exhibitions. Then first the picture of Christ was worshipped, then pictures of the Virgin and of saints came in for similar adoration.

Although the iconoclastic dispute led to an immense destruction of pictures, it does not seem probable that many valuable works of art were lost to the world in this way. But the victory of the image worshippers gave a great impulse to the arts of painting and mosaic work which was followed by a veritable renaissance in the Greek Church. Here, then, we come upon one of the points at which it is incumbent upon us to free our minds from the narrowness of Western prepossessions if we would understand the very different course of Church history in the East. We are accustomed to regard the period between the short, brilliant epoch of Charles the Great and Alcuin on the Continent and King Alfred and Bede in England on the one hand, and the great revival under St. Bernard, with the subsequent rise of scholasticism and Gothic architecture on the other, as containing emphatically "the dark ages." No doubt the lamp of learning was kept alive by the monks even during this gloomy period; but the flame did little more than shed a mild radiance through the dim cloisters. Any MS. decoration of this period is Byzantine

in character. Western art was dead. But at this very time art was reviving in the East and attaining to a life and a freedom which it had never reached before. It might have advanced still further, had not the Crusades, which promised deliverance for the holy sites of the East from the desecration of the infidel, brought ruin and misery to the Greek Christians.

CHAPTER III

THE ICONOCLASTIC REFORMS

(*a*) Nicephorus, *Antirrhetica*; Theophanes, *Chronographia*; Letters of Popes in Mansi, xii and xiii.

(*b*) Finlay, *History of the Byzantine Empire*, Book I.; Hefele, *History of the Councils*, Eng. trans., vol. v.; Freeman, *Historical Essays*, Series III., 1892; Oman, *Byzantine Empire*, 1886; Bury, *History of the Later Roman Empire*, vol. ii., 1889.

NOTHING is more remarkable in the history of the Eastern portion of the Roman Empire centred at Constantinople than its repeated revival after what may well have appeared to be hopeless decay and ruinous devastation. We shall make a great mistake if we think of it as simply characterised by Gibbon's classic title. This is by no means merely the story of a "Decline and Fall." First we have Constantine founding his new city on the Bosphorus and going far to make it the centre of the civilised world. Then, although the Germanic tribes repeatedly sacked and desolated Old Rome, they could do little more in the East than make raids into Greece, leaving Constantinople on one side as beyond their reach. Two hundred years after the founding of this city which stood for all that was most splendid and powerful in Eastern Europe, in a time of revival, while the great General Belisarius was regaining the lost territory of the empire in Africa and the south-west, his master Justinian was beautifying Constantinople and other Greek cities with unparalleled architectural splendour. Another hundred years passes, and we see the Eastern Empire ravaged by Persia and brought to the brink of ruin. Then the gifted Heraclius turns the tide of victory,

wrests the stolen provinces from the hands of the invader, and presses far into his enemy's territory with crushing effect. No sooner has this military miracle been achieved than a new and totally unexpected enemy comes up from the desert and defeats the victorious Byzantine power, to the amazement and dismay of the empire. The Arabs, fired by the new creed of Islam, tear off Syria, Egypt, and southern regions farther West, leaving only a mutilated torso to represent the ancient Roman Empire. Yet in vain does the mighty flood gather to sweep this remnant away. Constantinople still remains a virgin fortress, impregnable. Miserable times follow. The Mohammedans raid Asia Minor; tribes from the Danubian countries pour over Macedonia and Greece; the empire is virtually reduced to the limits of the one city of Constantinople. Now indeed it might appear as though the ancient Roman dominion in the East were approaching final dissolution. But that is not to be its fate. It has been called "effete," but still it displays marvellous vitality.

What is the explanation of this remarkable vitality? In part, the persistence of the empire through all the vicissitudes of fortune is to be attributed to its just judicature and skilful administration of government. The Roman law was well applied all through these changing times, and the machinery of government was worked with scientific exactness. Nowhere else in the world was the art of government so ably practised. Constantinople was the centre of civilisation in politics as well as in art and letters. Still, civilisation cannot be self-supporting. If the vigour of the early caliphs had been preserved by their successors no human power could have saved the world from the overthrow of the Christian religion as well as the destruction of European culture. Even after the ardour of missionary zeal among the Mohammedans had cooled they were still formidable, and when reinforced by the Turks, almost invincible. Then deliverance came from one of the most powerful men of history. It has been pointed out that while Charles Martel has

been immortalised for having checked a Moorish raid in the West that had nearly spent its force, and that could never have resulted in the permanent subjection of Europe, a much greater man who achieved a much greater feat has missed his laurels, partly because his action as a heretic offended the Church, but no doubt partly also because his achievements were carried out in the East. This man was Leo the Isaurian—Leo III.—the hero of Finlay's Byzantine history, a rough, uneducated peasant from a remote part of Asia Minor, who is said to have first attracted attention by bringing a present of sheep to the reigning emperor, but a man of genius, vigour, and character.

Leo founded a dynasty of able rulers who held the Eastern Empire together for generations, while the last relics of the Western Empire were in the melting-pot, out of which issued the nations of modern Europe. His own mighty task was to put an effectual and final stop to the Arab encroachments. Syria and Egypt were lost for ever; but Leo retained and strengthened all the empire north of the Mediterranean, remodelled the system of government, and established a military power that put an end to the danger of the swamping of Christianity by Islam. Here then is a man deserving of the highest honour by the Church, since in proving himself the saviour of the empire he became also the deliverer of the Church, with which it was to so great an extent conterminous. In spite of this fact, his own action in the Church called down on his head execrations instead of benedictions. Let us proceed to examine this remarkable phenomenon.

Leo seized the imperial power at a crisis of confusion in the year 716. Ten years later he issued an edict ordering the destruction of the sacred pictures. It has been commonly supposed that he first ordered them to be raised to a higher position on the walls so that the people could not reach up to kiss them. But the only authority for this opinion is the Latin translation of the life of the monk Stephen, on which Baronius bases his assertion of it. On

the other hand, Hefele has demonstrated that this must be a mistake. For one thing, many of the pictures were frescoes that could not be moved. There is a letter from the pope protesting against the destruction of images which we must date earlier than the year 730; but that year is the date commonly assigned for a second edict which is taken to be the earliest order for the demolition of the pictures. The decree does not appear to have been widely operative. But one of the first actions, if not the very first, taken in execution of the emperor's orders led to serious trouble. It was a daring deed, for it was the destruction of the most conspicuous and in some respects the most sacred of all the pictures. This was a representation of Christ over the great brass gates at Constantinople, which was reputed to work miraculous cures. Officials mounted a ladder in spite of the screaming protests of a mob of women, and one of them rudely smashed his axe into the face. Thereupon the exasperated women seized the ladder, flung the sacrilegious officials to the ground, and murdered them on the spot. Other scenes of violence followed in various places.

Now the question is, What led Leo to take this step and so to come into conflict with his people's religion? The action was his own; if it was a reformation, it was an imperial, not a popular reformation. The author of the article on Leo III. in Smith's *Dictionary of Biography* seems to sympathise with the old orthodox view of the case, according to which the emperor was a heretic denying the actual humanity of Christ, and therefore the possibility of representing our Lord by any picture. This was a charge frequently brought against the Iconoclasts by the defenders of images. It has been pointed out that Leo's old home in Isauria was a seat of Monophysitism. But we have no proof whatever of the existence of this subtle theological motive at the basis of Leo's policy, although it may be allowed that the atmosphere of the church of his youth would have predisposed him to turn with disgust from the materialism of the popular religion. We must look deeper

into the history of the whole question in order to understand the emperor's reasons for his revolutionary policy. More than a century before this, Serenus, bishop of Marseilles, flung all the pictures out of his church, an act of vandalism which drew down upon his head a letter of mild rebuke from Gregory the Great. The pope then took occasion to explain the use of pictures and to guard against the idolatrous abuse of them. "You ought not to have broken what was put up in the churches, not for adoration," he says, "but merely for the promotion of reverence. It is one thing to worship an image, and another to learn represented in the image what we ought to worship. For what the Scriptures are for those who can read, that a picture is for those who are unable to read; for in this also the uneducated see in what way they have to walk. In it they read who are not acquainted with the Scriptures." [1]

No statement of the case could be more unexceptionable. The stiffest Puritan would be hard put to it to answer such an argument. Not only stained-glass windows, but illustrated Bibles and lantern services are justified to-day on similar grounds. But the pope's argument is one thing, and the people's practice another. In point of fact, throughout the East at the time of Leo the pictures were worshipped. The physical act of kissing them was called worship, and this act was made illegal by the iconoclastic emperors. But over and above that, pictures and relics were often treated as fetishes and venerated for their supposed miraculous cures. No doubt there would be all gradations from the æsthetic pursuit of art among the cultured and the simple contemplation of pictorial lessons on the part of the devout, to the grossest idolatry and magic-mongery among the more degraded and superstitious. It was against the popular adoration of the images that Leo was fighting.

We must remember that at this very time the emperor's great rival was the caliph, and the standing

[1] Lib. ix. Ep. 9.

menace to Christianity the religion of Islam which made it the first duty of the faithful to extirpate idolatry. The case for Mohammedanism was strengthened by the existence of idolatry in the Christian Church, and a wise Christian ruler might well be anxious to remove that scandal from his cause. Only two years before Leo took action the caliph was vigorously engaged in destroying the pictures among the Christian churches in his dominion. Naturally enough this similarity of policy led the image worshippers to accuse their fellow Christian Iconoclasts of treasonable connections with the Mohammedans. At the seventh œcumenical council (II Nicæa, A.D. 787) the monk John accused Constantine, bishop of Nacolia in Phrygia, of collusion with the caliph. This bishop, who had been actively engaged in tearing down the images in his own district, came to Constantinople to consult the Patriarch Germanus on the subject. He got no encouragement in that quarter. Germanus was a staunch supporter of image worship, and in the case of this bold bishop we have a rare instance of independence on the part of the head ecclesiastic of the Greek Church at Constantinople in opposition to the emperor, which is in marked contrast to the too common subservience of the Constantinople patriarchs. But that fact makes it all the more remarkable that Leo should have so acted as to stir up a hornets' nest just when he was consolidating his power for the security of the empire. The fair and reasonable explanation is that which is also most simple and straightforward, namely, that we should accept the emperor's own declared motive as genuine. He regarded image worship as idolatry. He saw that Christianity as a spiritual faith was becoming swamped and drowned in the grossest superstition. The pictures were actually idols. The people were satisfied to kiss and adore them; in illness they resorted to them for miraculous cures; if they had any other religious practice to which they attached weight, it was the treasuring of relics. Perhaps the reason why Leo did not attack this also was that it was practised in private. The relics were the

Christian Lares and Penates. They were, like Rachel's teraphim, survivals in the home of a kind of superstition not so openly observed in public. But the pictures were in the churches or out in the open air, and the adoration of them was public. Here was an overt public superstition which could be directly attacked. That this is not too harsh a verdict on the popular image worship is proved by the serious commotion that the emperor's policy aroused. If no more than Gregory the Great's didactic use of pictures had been in practice, people would not have been so profoundly stirred at the removal of their lesson illustrations. What roused them to fury was the idea that the emperor was taking away their idols, their gods. Thus this very passion of opposition justified Leo's theory of the system he was attacking. In a word, Leo was a reformer, a protestant, a man who saw the fatal character of the materialistic religion of his day, and endeavoured to alter it.

Nevertheless Leo made two serious mistakes. First, he acted solely on his own initiative and by force. His reformation was purely a State action; there was no popular movement supporting it. Such a reformation, coming on to the Church from without, does not stir up an internal revival of better things. Secondly, it was negative, only destructive; it did nothing to substitute a new living religion for the old superstition. Leo was no Luther. It is the positive revival of religion alone that can effect genuine reformation.

Still, while we must admit these two damaging factors of the case, we may hold that the emperor's motive was good and honest and enlightened. In point of fact, there was some revival of religion under the iconoclastic emperors, and it was accompanied by a betterment of morals. The period that followed Leo's reforms was a real improvement on that which preceded it. Mr. Bury holds that the Iconoclasts should not be regarded as Puritans; that it would be more correct to consider them to be Rationalists.[1] Certainly they did not anticipate the grim

[1] Bury, *History of Later Roman Empire*, vol. ii. p. 429.

rigour which is associated with Puritanism in Sir Walter Scott's novels. The reverse was the case; they introduced gay living into court and city, and set their faces against the ascetic ideal cherished by the monks. Nevertheless they were not unlike the true English Puritans of Elizabeth's time, the men who discarded "vain traditions" in order to have the Church governed by "the pure word of God," and who opposed the more materialistic ritual in favour of inward religion.

It has been maintained that one aim of Leo and his successors in suppressing image worship was to oppose the influence of the monks. Now it is a fact that, while the parish priests for the most part submitted tamely to the imperial orders, as became government officials, the monks stoutly resisted them, for it was in the monasteries that the liberty of the Church was cherished.

Besides, while the monks opposed imperial interference in ecclesiastical affairs, they were out of favour with the authorities on other grounds also. Monasticism was the deadliest enemy of militarism, and that in two ways. The monks would not fight; and therefore the monasteries were draining the empire of a large part of its able-bodied citizens, and these especially the men of grit. At the same time their celibate life was keeping down the population, and so, as has been pointed out earlier in this book, rendering the provinces too weak to withstand the onrush of teeming multitudes of more prolific races that hovered on their borders.

While, however, all this is worthy of consideration, it will not account for Iconoclasm, for Leo could have found other means of opposing monasticism, and means which would not have enlisted the populace in its favour. It was bad policy to select a ground of attack which involved a direct assault on the religion of the people. Turn where we may for an explanation, we are driven back to the conclusion that the iconoclastic enterprise was a reformation movement, the aim of which was to save Christianity from degenerating into the merely mechanical performances of

idolatry. It may be remarked as a further confirmation of this position that both Leo and his son Constantine opposed Maryolatry.[1]

The execution of Leo's orders met with violent opposition; but as this was combined with resistance to a harsh and burdensome system of taxation, it is difficult to apportion the relative forces of the two influences. There were risings in Italy and in Greece. The imperial fleet in the Cyclades mutinied, and was accompanied by one of the imperial armies in an attack on Constantinople, carrying with it a man named Cosmas, whom the rebels elected emperor. The expedition turned out to be a disastrous failure. Leo defeated the fleet on its approach to Constantinople by means of "Greek Fire." The commander Agallianos plunged fully armed into the sea and was drowned. Cosmas was taken alive and executed. So was another leader. But Leo treated the rest of the insurgents with leniency. His action throughout was milder than that of Constantine, his son and successor.

Writers of later times[2] have charged Leo with one act of inconceivable barbarity. Near the bronze bazaar at Constantinople was an imperial institution consisting of a library and a theological college, presided over by a scholar entitled the "Œcumenical Doctor," with whom twelve learned men were associated for the instruction of the students, the whole body being supported from the public funds. Leo was in the habit of consulting these professors, and he naturally turned to them to join him in his policy of reform. It would have been a great point to have gained a verdict of theological science from such an authority. That however was refused him. Then, according to the incredible story of the later writers, the emperor had faggots heaped against the building, set them on fire, and so burnt the library and with it the "Œcumenical Doctor" and his twelve colleagues. No contemporary writer mentions any such atrocity. Theophanes

[1] For proofs see authorities cited in Bury, *op. cit.* vol. ii. p. 428, note 1.

[2] *e.g.* Zonaras and George the Sinner.

merely remarks curtly that Leo put an end to "pious education" and shut up the educational institutions.[1]

In other matters Leo now proceeded further towards what we know as Protestantism. He gave up the intercession of the saints and the worship of relics.[2] At first he had only interfered with pictures outside the churches; subsequently he carried on his Iconoclasm within their walls. A later decree forbade anybody even to make a picture of a saint, martyr, or angel; all these things were accursed. This was a condemnation of sacred art in itself.

It was a great annoyance to Leo that Germanus the patriarch of Constantinople stoutly opposed his reforming action, and quite contrary to precedent for this man to be showing a spirit of independence more like that of his brother at Rome than anything the Eastern Empire was accustomed to. The emperor sent for Germanus (A.D. 729) and expostulated with him, but in vain. Leo even appears to have tried to entangle the intrepid old man in a charge of treason; but this unworthy device also failed.[3] In January, A.D. 730, Leo held a *Silentium*[4] in support of his policy. This was a civil council that had no authority over the Church. Nevertheless it was impossible for the patriarch to retain his office in face of the government's disapproval, and therefore he quietly retired. Here we see the difference between the East and the West. A Roman pontiff would have held his ground and defied the emperor to do his worst. Germanus was as intrepid as any pope. But it is one thing to be defiant to a distant potentate when supported by enthusiastic followers in a position of virtual independence, which was the case with the pope in the West; and quite another thing to show independence under the very shadow of the imperial palace in the East, where for generations the Church has meekly submitted to the patronage of the State. Germanus never wavered from his convinced policy. When, at last, a venerable man ninety years old, he saw that he could

[1] Theophanes, i. 623. [2] *Ibid.* p. 625. [3] *Ibid.* p. 626 ff.
[4] *i.e.* A consultative assembly.

never hope to give effect to that policy, he resigned his office.

Gregory III. was now pope at Rome. He had sent to Leo for the emperor's confirmation of his election, and he had not been consecrated till it had arrived. This was the last occasion on which a pope solicited approval of his appointment from Constantinople. Now Leo's action in the iconoclastic crusade greatly angered Gregory, who assembled a council at Rome which excommunicated the Iconoclasts. The emperor replied by confiscating all the pope's estates in the Eastern provinces, and by separating the ecclesiastical government of south Italy, Sicily, and other parts farther east from the jurisdiction of Rome, and transferring it to the patriarch of Constantinople. Gregory wrote to Germanus saying that if anybody misuses the words of the Old Testament, which were only directed against idolatry, "we can only hold him to a barking dog." This was before the Silentium. After that council had been followed by the resignation of Germanus, the pope wrote to the emperor explaining his views and justifying the use of images. He urged that this did not involve idolatry. The Israelites were commanded to make images of cherubim. Leo had compared himself to Uzziah—he meant Hezekiah, who destroyed the brazen serpent. "Yes," says Gregory, "Uzziah was your brother, and like you he did violence to the priests."[1]

Leo III. died in the year 741 and was succeeded by his son Constantine V., nicknamed "Copronymus," after an infantile misdemeanour which occurred when the patriarch was plunging him into the baptismal font.[2] The name clung to him in later years and was used as an encouragement for the foulest calumnies concerning his conduct. No emperor was ever bespattered with more disgusting accusations, but seeing that these were flung at him by bitter enemies in the fury of the iconoclastic contest no historical value can be attached to them. The devastating plague

[1] Mansi, xii. p. 959 ff.; Hardouin, iv. p. 1 ff.
[2] Theophanes, p. 615.

which swept over the empire and reached Constantinople in 747 was regarded by the populace as a judgment of heaven on the sin of Iconoclasm. Unfortunately Constantine cannot be exonerated from the charge of cruelty. He went to greater lengths than his father in the suppression of image worship, and even carried on a severe persecution to the extent of torture. The protestant spirit of the iconoclastic movement which appeared in Leo was also seen in Constantine, for he was accused of rejecting the intercession of the Virgin Mary, though it was allowed that he called her the mother of God—as would be expected if there was any connection between Iconoclasm and Monophysitism; and, further, he was charged with denying the transference of the merits of the martyrs.

Constantine was superseded for a time by his brother-in-law Artavasdos, who was acknowledged by the pope and who restored the pictures to the churches. On recovering his power, Constantine had the eyes of Artavasdos and his two sons put out and then exhibited the miserable men in triumph at the chariot races, after which they were imprisoned in a monastery.

Constantine now consolidated his government and proved himself to be a vigorous ruler in Church as well as in State affairs. More than ever the ecclesiastical discipline of the East came to be concentrated at Constantinople and controlled by the emperor. He ordered the metropolitans and provincials to hold provincial synods, and convoked a general council which met at Constantinople in the year 754, and was attended by 338 bishops.[1] But though this was probably the largest Church council that had ever been held, the patriarchs of Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem—being now in the Saracen dominions—were unable to attend it; nor were any bishops from the Western Church present. It could not therefore be taken as an œcumenical council. This council forbade the employment of images and pictures in churches as a pagan practice, condemned the use of the crucifix, proscribed "the

[1] Theophanes, p. 654.

godless art of painting," and ordered all who made crucifixes or pictures for worship in the churches to be excommunicated by the Church and punished by the State. Two years later image worship was proscribed with greater severity than ever, and so were both the use of relics and the practice of praying to the saints. Many monks and clergy were banished for their disobedience to these orders; some were flogged, tortured, and mutilated.

The most popular defender of image worship was the abbot Stephen, who has been so highly honoured in the Greek Church as a saint and martyr that he bears the name of "Stephen the younger" by comparison with the protomartyr. According to the story of his life written half a century later, in the year 763 Constantine Copronicus sent an order to this monk, who was resident at Mount St. Auxentius, to sign the decree of the Constantinople council. On his refusal he was dragged by soldiers from his cave and imprisoned with some other monks for six days without food. Liberated for a time, he was seized again on libellous charges, dragged once more from his cave, beaten, tortured, and banished to the island of Proconnesus in the Propontis. Here a number of monks, driven from their cells by the persecution, gathered round their hero and leader. Thus his place of exile was becoming a rallying point for the forces of opposition to the government policy, or, as it would be regarded at headquarters, a nest of sedition. So Stephen was arrested a third time, bound hand and foot, and carried off to Constantinople, where he was flung into the great prison of the Prætorium, together with 342 mutilated monks, some of whom had had their ears, noses, or hands cut off, their eyes gouged out, or their beards smeared with pitch and fired. The saint turned the prison into a monastery for worship and meditation. He was put on his trial and condemned to death. A saying attributed to Constantine may help to account for the vindictive fury with which Stephen was treated. Seeing how popular the monk was and how obstinately he maintained his cause, Constantine is reported to have declared that Stephen was

emperor and that it was only this man who was obeyed. Thereupon—as in the case of Henry II.'s impatient exclamation about Thomas à Becket—obsequious attendants took action. The imperial bodyguard dashed into the prison, dragged the bold monk out into the street, and there battered him to death with clubs and stones.[1]

Ruthless conduct such as this provoked fierce opposition on the part of the image worshippers. The patriarch of Constantinople was suspected of taking part in a conspiracy against the emperor. He was deposed, tried, and condemned to death. Thereupon he confessed himself an Iconoclast; but no mercy was shown him. He was set on an ass with his face towards the tail and conducted in this insulting way to the amphitheatre, where he was beheaded.

The persecution had now become much more than an iconoclastic reformation. It had developed into a brutal attack on monasticism. The victims were no longer painted pictures; they were living men. As at the English Reformation, there was a "dissolution of monasteries." But this was less general, and more cruel. Where the monks were turned out of their monasteries, these buildings were converted into taverns. Constantine degraded himself in his attempt to degrade his ecclesiastical enemies. He compelled a number of monks to march round the circus at Constaninople hand in hand with women—either nuns or persons of less respectable character;[2] it is not clear which.

[1] *Vita Stephani* in *Analecta*, pp. 546 ff. Hefele admits that this is largely legendary (*Hist. of Councils*, v. p. 323).

[2] Theophanes, p. 676; Nicephorus, p. 83; Zonaras, xv. 5.

CHAPTER IV

THE RESTORATION OF IMAGE WORSHIP

(*a*) Nicephorus, *Antirrhetica*; Theophanes, *Chronographia*; John of Damascus (*Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*); Theodore of Studium (Migne, xcix.); Mansi, xiii.

(*b*) Finlay, *Hist. Byzantine Empire*, Book I.; Hefele, *History of the Councils*, Eng. Trans., vol. v.; Bury, *Later Rom. Empire*, vol. ii., 1889; Alice Gardner, *St. Theodore of Studium*, 1905.

THE war of the Byzantine emperors against image worship falls into two periods, being broken by an interval of a generation during which the practice was revived and encouraged by the government. The first period, consisting of the reigns of Leo the Isaurian and his son Constantine Copronicus, lasted for nearly half a century (from Leo's first decree in A.D. 726 to the death of Constantine in 775). This was followed by thirty-eight years of peace to the image worshippers, when the custom so dear to the hearts of the monks and the populace flourished again under the favour of the court as well as with the unvarying approval of the Church. Then another strong emperor, Leo the Armenian, returned to the example of his namesake from Isauria and renewed the attack on the pictures, and his policy was continued by his two successors; but this second iconoclastic campaign only lasted for twenty-nine years (A.D. 813–842), during most of which it was carried on very mildly; and in the end image worship was effectually restored. It has since continued for more than a thousand years down to our own time, and it is now one of the chief characteristics of the Greek Church. In other words, the premature reformation, twice attempted, and

each time successful as a government measure, never laid hold of the Church, and ultimately it failed entirely, the old order re-establishing itself as completely as though nothing had ever happened to interfere with it. Therefore we must regard Iconoclasm as an episode, not as a stage in the development of Church history. Nevertheless it is extremely suggestive, for both the attack on image worship and the defence are symptomatic; by means of them we can learn much about the actual condition of Christendom in the East during a little-studied period. The iconoclastic emperors, for the most part, were strong rulers who successfully defended the empire against the encroachment of foreign powers and who maintained good order within its borders. During their reigns the law was justly administered; security of life and property—except in the case of the persecuted monks—was well guarded; and the morals of the people were higher than at any other time in the history of the Eastern Church. On the other hand—and here we come to the paradox of the situation—the defence of image worship was carried on with genuine religious motives on the part of the ecclesiastical leaders. The most cultivated and devoted Churchmen of the day were champions of what the Iconoclasts stigmatised as "idolatry." Further, it is a curious fact that, while each of the two reforming campaigns was initiated by a powerful emperor—the first by Leo the Isaurian and the second by Leo the Armenian, each of the reactionary movements sprang from the energy of a woman—the first from that of the Empress Irene and the second from that of the Empress Theodora. Unhappily we cannot ascribe to these ladies very lofty motives, at all events not to the first of them.

Leo IV., the son and successor of Constantine Copronicus (A.D. 775), was in delicate health during his short reign, and when he died leaving as his heir his son Constantine VI., Porphyrogenitus—(born in the purple, *i.e.* the purple chamber at the palace), then only ten years old, the regency devolved on one of the many remarkable women who figure so conspicuously in the history of the Byzantine

Empire. This was the cultivated and brilliant Athenian beauty, Irene, who was only twenty-eight years of age when she became a widow. Of Greek blood, she found in her own people the sympathy and support she wanted in order to maintain her independence against her late husband's family and racial connections. The iconoclastic emperors were of Asiatic origin—Isaurian and Armenian; the chief supporters of image worship were found among the Greeks. It was good policy therefore for Irene to favour the icons. She was a woman of illimitable ambition, an ambition that smothered the instincts of motherhood. Discovering a conspiracy against her power instigated by her brother-in-law, Cæsar Nicephorus, she forced Leo's five brothers into the priesthood and compelled them to officiate at the high altar of St. Sophia during the Christmas ceremonies. Meanwhile Irene was actively engaged in the restoration of image worship. With this end in view she was just as Erastian as the iconoclastic emperors had been. It was all government action and forcible interference with ecclesiastical affairs. Irene deposed the patriarch Paul who was an Iconoclast, and nominated for the head of the Greek Church Tarasius, a man of high reputation for learning and character, but a civilian, the secretary of the imperial cabinet. The assembly of citizens to whom the empress proposed her candidate elected him by acclamation. He was a popular personage and the empress's policy was also popular. But had the case been otherwise resistance to the court would have been regarded as preposterous. Tarasius was reluctant to take office, and he refused to do so till his election had been confirmed by a council—consisting, of course, of image worshippers. The newly appointed patriarch then revived the intercourse between Constantinople and the other patriarchates which had been broken off during the dominance of the iconoclastic emperors. Thus the schism was brought to an end, and the Roman Pope Hadrian wrote a joyful letter at the return of the empire to the fold of orthodoxy, in the course of which he defended the practice of image worship by an appeal to Scripture, quoting, among

other instances, the case of Jacob kissing the top of his staff.[1]

Tarasius desired to have the matter finally settled by an œcumenical council. The empress agreed, and the council assembled first at Constantinople, where it was violently broken up, and then at Nicæa, in the year 787. This was the so-called "seventh general council," and the second council of Nicæa. Neither Irene nor her young son were present in person; but they were represented by high officers of State. Nicephorus, the historian, who afterwards became patriarch of Constantinople, was the secretary. There were two delegates from Rome, and to them was assigned the first place of honour as representing the pope. Next came Tarasius as the bishop of "New Rome." Two Oriental monks named John and Thomas were supposed to represent the absent patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem. The virtual imprisonment of these patriarchs within the dominions of the Saracens would have prevented their coming even if they had been summoned; but as things turned out they were not even communicated with, the messengers finding that they could not get safely through to them.[2] All the other members of the council were subjects of the Byzantine Empire. Therefore, with the all-important exception of the presence of the Roman delegates, this second council of Nicæa was no more œcumenical than the iconoclastic council of Constantinople in the reign of Constantine Copronicus. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that it registered the prevalent opinion of the Church. The enlightened iconoclastics had proved themselves to be a minority with no popular power; they had only succeeded for a time by means of the strong arm of the State. The second council of Nicæa carried the people with it when deciding positively in favour of the

[1] "Adoravit fastigium virgæ ejus," Heb. xi. 21 (Vulg.).

[2] Nevertheless Hefele considers that the two monks had a right to represent the absent patriarchs, because they "represented in fact the faith of the three patriarchs in regard to images and the veneration of them" (*Hist. Councils*, vol. v. p. 361).

pictures. It argued that "the oftener one gazed on these representations, the more would the gazer be stirred to the resemblance of the originals and the imitation of them, and to offer his greeting and reverent homage to them,[1] not the actual worship,[2] which belonged to the godhead alone," . . . for "whosoever does reverence[3] to an image does reverence to the person represented by it."[4]

The pope adopted the decrees of the council, and thus Irene had her ecclesiastical policy justified by the Church voting at a great council and speaking through its chief pontiff. Her personal history is an ugly commentary on these transactions. She was so greedy of her authority that she was unwilling for her son Constantine to take up the government when he came of age. For five years he succeeded in having the upper hand. Then he misused his opportunity by putting out the eyes of one of his uncles, Nicephorus the Cæsar, and cutting out the tongues of four other uncles. These crimes might have been condoned by the cruel custom of the times. But when Constantine divorced the Empress Maria, whom his tyrannical mother had forced upon him, and married Theodota, one of his mother's maids of honour, that ecclesiastical offence alienated the Church authorities and destroyed his popularity. Irene came back into power. Thereupon she showed her vindictiveness, or at least her unappeasable ambition, by having Constantine's eyes put out. This unnatural mother who blinded her own son has been canonised by the Greek Church for her restoration of image worship. She was more reasonably appreciated in her lifetime. Dethroned by a court conspiracy (A.D. 802), she was exiled to the island of Lesbos, where she died a few months later; and Nicephorus, the imperial treasurer, who had led the conspiracy, succeeded to the empire. He proved to be a man of moderate ideas, who wished to maintain image worship without persecuting its opponents; but, like Zeno and Justinian, he tried to bring about peace by forcibly

[1] ἀσπασμὸν καὶ τιμητικὴν προσκύνησιν.
[2] τὴν ἀληθινὴν λατρείαν.
[3] προσκυνεῖ.
[4] Mansi, 374, *et seq.*

silencing discussion. Where two strong men had failed it is not surprising that this weaker ruler did not succeed. In pursuit of his policy of encouraging image worship, on the death of Tarasius, Nicephorus appointed his namesake, known to us as Nicephorus the historian, to be patriarch of Constantinople, a man of principle and a conscientious supporter of the orthodox position at the return of Iconoclasm (A.D. 806).

A disastrous war with the Bulgarians, in which the Emperor Nicephorus was slain, led to a revolution, in consequence of which his son Staviacius, after having been acknowledged by the soldiers for two months, was sent to a monastery, there to die of his wounds; and the previous emperor's son-in-law Michael I. was set on the throne. This revolution was carried out by the bigoted party of the image worshippers who had resented the comprehensive policy of the late emperor. But Michael turned out to be a weak ruler. He was regarded as pious, and undoubtedly he pleased the Church by granting out of the State funds lavish doles to her charities and to leading clergy; but since he made similar grants to high-placed court functionaries and chief officers of the army, such action was remarkably like bribery. Another of his pious deeds was to cover the tomb of Tarasius with silver, in grateful acknowledgment of the kindness of the dead patriarch—now prayed to as a saint—for causing a severe epidemic to spread among the invading Bulgarians. But best of all, he won the admiration of the orthodox by yielding to their persuasion in abandoning his liberal policy and persecuting the supporters of Iconoclasm. This fact shows that the movement which Leo the Isaurian had commenced as a piece of high-handed imperial policy, despotically forced on the Church, was not so entirely without popular support as its opponents contended; or, at all events, that it had gained some friends in the course of the eighty years that had intervened. A number of Iconoclasts together with Paulicians and other heretics were persecuted, some even being put to death.

Then came the reaction, originated on other grounds. Michael was quite incompetent to sustain the war with the Bulgarians, and in order to save the empire the soldiers elected one of their generals, Leo the Armenian, as its head (A.D. 813), sending Michael like his predecessor into a monastery. The new emperor proved his strength at once by refusing the patriarch's demand that he should follow his predecessor's example and sign a declaration of orthodoxy—which, under the circumstances, meant image worship. In course of time he brought about an effective reorganisation of civil government, and throughout his reign he maintained good order and the regular administration of justice in the law courts. Thus in the second iconoclastic period, as in the first, we see under the reforming emperors both good government and respectable morals. Leo appears to have been in sympathy with Iconoclasm from the first, although as a calm, statesman-like ruler, he desired to act with moderation and to maintain the peace of the Church. But he was urged to take stronger measures against the image worshippers by a remarkable man known as John the Grammarian.

We have now reached the period of Alfred and Alcuin in the West, when a temporary revival of letters seemed to promise an end to the intellectual slumber that was settling down over Europe—a promise doomed to miserable disappointment. At this very time in the Eastern Church we have John the Grammarian, a scholar, versed in the science of his day, which he appears to have acquired from the Arabians. Of course he was accused of magic by the orthodox. But John was an abbot and of an illustrious family. With him were associated other learned men who also repudiated the superstition of image worship. The reformers were numerically weak; but morally and intellectually they were worthy of respect—a small body of clear-sighted, cultivated men, who strove in vain to stem the tide of the popular religion, which consisted of materialistic ideas and sensuous ceremonies. These scholars persuaded Leo to have the pictures removed from the churches which were in

possession of the clergy of their own party. Even that mild action—a trifle in comparison with the tyrannical persecution by Constantine Copronymus—provoked violent opposition on the part of the monks. The soldiers retaliated. A riotous body of men from the army broke into the patriarchal palace at Constantinople and destroyed the sacred pictures that adorned its walls. Passion was rising to fever-heat on both sides. Then, much against his inclination, Leo found it necessary to take action. He deposed the patriarch Nicephorus—a deed for which we may be selfishly grateful, since it gave this leading actor in the events of his times leisure to write his history. The emperor appointed a layman Theodotus Mellissenus to the vacant post; and he summoned what he wished to be regarded as a general council at Constantinople (A.D. 816), which confirmed the decision of the earlier iconoclastic council in the same city (that held A.D. 754), condemned image worship, and anathematised the patriarchs Tarasius and Nicephorus and all image worshippers. Recalcitrant clergy were to be deposed; but there were few such, for most submitted. We have seen that this was the normal practice in the Byzantine Empire. Now again, as on previous occasions, the stubborn opposition came from the independent monks, not from the demure State-endowed and State-regulated clergy.

Leo was rewarded for his vigorous reforms in the civil service by assassination, and was succeeded by one of the conspirators, a trusted friend — Michael II., nicknamed "the Stammerer" (A.D. 820). This emperor was tolerant towards both parties, since he wished to be conciliatory, although he leaned towards the iconoclastic policy. He died in the year 829, and was succeeded by Theophilus, who at first followed the same line of policy, but three years after his accession issued a decree prohibiting image worship, which was executed in some instances with much harshness.[1] Lazarus, a famous painter, was imprisoned

[1] Continuator, 62; Cedrenus, 514. We now have to part company with our two chief authorities for the iconoclastic period—Theophanes and Nicephorus.

and scourged, and two monks, Theophanes the Singer and Theodore Graptus, were tortured—the latter receiving his surname from the fact that some verses were branded on his forehead. A little later John the Grammarian was elected patriarch and was induced to summon a synod which condemned image worship.

On the death of Theophilus (A.D. 842), his widow Theodora, as regent to her son Michael III., surnamed "The Drunkard," restored the image worship and so put an end to the second iconoclastic campaign. Within a few months of her accession to power she summoned a council, which confirmed the decision of the second council of Nicæa. Still, the fires of the controversy were only smouldering; for in the year 860 the patriarch Photius proposed to Pope Nicholas another council against the Iconoclasts, which met in the following year. But, though this council deposed Ignatius, who had supplanted Photius, we have no record of any reference to images during the course of its proceedings. Eight years later (A.D. 869) yet another synod denounced the Iconoclasts and upheld the pictures as useful for the "instruction" of the people. Henceforth they have hung on the walls of Greek churches, undisturbed except by the ravages of war and time, and adored by successive generations of the devout.

Although the iconoclastic movement sprang from the enlightened policy of two dynasties of strong emperors, while the practice of image worship was maintained by the ignorant populace and the fanatical monks, it must not be supposed that the latter lacked capable and high-minded defenders. On the contrary, the ablest theologian in each of the two periods of Iconoclasm was a champion of image worship. To the first period belongs John of Damascus, and to the second Theodore of Studium, the only churchmen of permanent fame who appeared in the Eastern Church during the eighth and ninth centuries.

John of Damascus is known as the last of the Fathers. He it was who summed up the results of the previous centuries of controversy and gave to his Church the dogmas

of orthodoxy in the stereotyped form which has characterised them during all subsequent ages. There is much that is mythical in the story of his life. We cannot fix the date of his birth; but it is clear that he was ordained before the year 735. His death occurred sometime between the years 759 and 767. Thus his active life coincides with the period of the great iconoclastic persecution beginning in the reign of Leo the Isaurian and extending through the greater part of that of Constantine Copronymus. John came from a Christian family in the city of Damascus bearing the Arabic name of Mansour, and he held for a time an honourable post in the court of the caliph. From this place of shelter he launched his attacks on Leo the Isaurian with impunity, when that emperor was engaged in putting down picture worship. Unable to get at him directly, Leo is said to have sent the caliph a forged letter in the handwriting of John offering to let the emperor into Damascus. Thereupon, we are told, the caliph had John's right hand cut off. It was restored to him in response to his prayer to the Virgin. Subsequently John retired to the famous monastery of Mar Saba, still overhanging the gorge of the Kidron in the wilderness of Judæa. The monks were afraid to receive so important a personage from the court till they had tested his humility. This they did by sending him back to Damascus with a load of baskets manufactured at the monastery. There is no reason to question the second story simply because we must regard the earlier narrative as legendary, for truth and fiction are always mixed up in these lives of saints, and the ordeal was quite characteristic. John stood this and every other test that was devised to try him, after which he was duly accepted. He lived the rest of his days in his out of the world retreat, composing hymns and theological works.

The most important of the works of John of Damascus is the *De Fide Orthodoxa*.[1] What the *Summa* of Thomas Aquinas is for the Roman Church and what Calvin's

[1] Ἔνδοσις ἀκριβὴς τῆς ὀρθοδόξου πίστεως.

Institutes is for the Reformed Church, that is this work for the Greek Church—the most orderly and systematic exposition of the accepted theology. It is divided into four books: Book I. discusses the doctrine of God and the Trinity; Book II. is concerned with Creation and the Nature of Man; Book III. states the doctrine of Christ and the Incarnation, including the relation of the two natures and the two wills, Mary as the mother of God, the death of our Lord and His descent into Hades; Book IV. carries on the doctrine of Christ to His resurrection and reign; but it is chiefly occupied with a number of miscellaneous subjects—such as faith, worship, images, Scripture, sin, virginity, resurrection, etc. Like Augustine, who gave its character to Latin theology, especially in so far as he was followed by Gregory the Great—the last of the Western Fathers and the first mediæval theologian—John of Damascus, the last of the Eastern Fathers, sets before us the essence of Greek theology. It is interesting to see where these Fathers differ. The mysterious subject of the procession of the Holy Spirit, on which the two churches divided, really belongs to a later period, although John anticipates the Greek position. The following are his chief points of distinction from Augustine and Gregory:—His assertion of free will—a marked feature of Greek theology throughout in contra-distinction from Latin; his silence as to original sin; his distinction between foreknowledge and predestination; his denial of the physical fire of hell—so prominent in the lurid horrors of the mediæval inferno from Gregory to Dante; and his moderate views of the sacraments, which he holds to be only two—Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

The other important theologian of the iconoclastic period is Theodore of Studium, who comes in the second and milder time of imperial attacks on image worship as the champion of the pictures. He may be said to have pronounced the final word of orthodoxy on the subject. Theodore was born in the year 759 in a family of high

social position at Constantinople. Thus he was a youth sixteen years old when Irene restored the worship of pictures, and the greater part of his life was spent in the subsequent period of image worship. Under the influence of his uncle Paul, who renounced the gay society of Constantinople and retired to a cave, a wave of enthusiasm for monasticism swept over the whole family. Theodore, with his father, his remaining uncles and his brothers, went into a monastic retreat under the direction of Paul, while his mother took her one little daughter to live with her "in cellular fashion." It would seem that the mother was the dominant influence in this scattering of her family, for when her youngest son, breaking down at the piteous moment of parting, clung to her neck begging her to let him stay with her, the determined woman answered, "If you do not go willingly, my child, I will drag you with my own hand on board ship."

For thirteen years Theodore lived in the monastery of Saccudio under his uncle Paul, who ordained him to the priesthood and then insisted on consecrating him abbot in place of himself—a singular act of self-abnegation, which, while it does honour to the devotion and humility of the senior, and helps us to understand the spell he had cast on his family, also testifies to the high qualities that had been revealed in the junior. Practically they lived as joint abbots—for Theodore would not let his uncle retire—first at Saccudio and then at Studium, a monastery situated within the walls of Constantinople. Constantine Porphyrogenitus had broken up the establishment at Saccudio in a rage because the monks would not give their consent to his second marriage. This incident, revealing the emperor's desire to have an endorsement of his conduct from the monks, followed by the refusal of the monks to grant it, shows how powerful the monastery was as an independent body. On her return to power Irene had reinstated the scattered monks. But a raid of the Saracens afterwards made it necessary for them to retreat across the Bosphorus; and then it was that Theodore was

appointed abbot of the great monastery of Studium. The monks in this monastery were of the order of *Acœmeti* (the Sleepless), so named because they took turns in a continuous chanting of the praise of God in their chapel that never ceased day or night all through the twenty-four hours the whole year round. This monastery was also a famous centre for the copying of manuscripts, and the beautiful handwriting here developed became famous.

When Leo the Armenian revived the iconoclastic movement, Theodore appeared as the champion of the pictures. In defiance of the imperial commands, he arranged a procession of sacred icons borne aloft through the streets of Constantinople on Palm Sunday in the year 815. It is in Theodore's writings that we get the clearest understanding of the case for image worship. We can understand the popular idolatry. But what we want to see is how men of intelligence, culture, and genuine religious earnestness, like John of Damascus and Theodore of Studium, could support what the reforming emperors were endeavouring to suppress as childish superstition and rank idolatry. There must have been some intellectual reason and some high religious motive in the strenuous opposition of these men to what strikes us as an enlightened and elevated policy. Our best answer to this question is to be found in the writings of Theodore—his *Antirrhetica Adversus Iconomachos* and his letters. His arguments amount in the main to three: (1) Theodore insists on the impiety of the secular government in interfering with the affairs of the Church. It was late in the day to raise such a point, at Constantinople of all places. But although people had tamely submitted to interference which only affected bishops and theologians, in appointing and deposing ecclesiastics, and in dictating doctrinal statements, it was another matter when emperors ventured to lay their finger on the popular worship in the churches. Besides, the monks had always stood for the independence of the Church, even when the bishops had meekly bowed to the

yoke of the State. (2) Theodore thought he detected an attack on the doctrine of the incarnation. Here the discussion enters the region of theological controversy. The Iconoclasts were suspected of monophysitism. They had come from the home of the Monophysites in Asia Minor—the instigator of the first attack from Isauria, the leader of the second from Armenia. Then the controversy was diverted from its original question. It was no longer merely supposed to be the contention of the Iconoclasts that the worship of images was idolatry; they were charged with denying that any true picture of Christ could be made, because as God He had no longer a circumscribed bodily form. The contention of the image worshippers, on the other hand, was that this line of argument destroyed the permanence of the incarnation. The humanity of Christ is lost if He is not such that He can be represented in a picture. (3) The dreadful charge of Manichæism —so often revived in heresy controversies—was raised against the Iconoclasts. Their aversion to a representation of the bodily appearence of Christ was taken by the image worshippers as a sign of their reprobation of matter as evil in itself. So was their objection to kissing the pictures.

We must admit that there was some ground for Theodore's contentions. The iconoclastic emperors may have had a good cause; but they spoilt it by their tyranny. They did not go the way to effect a genuine reformation of religion. Then there was a real danger lest the incarnation itself should be lost in theories about it. A picture of Christ was a wholesome antidote to the abstractions of metaphysical theology in relation to the Second Person of the Trinity. Possibly, too, some truly religious influence was exercised by the contemplation of the pictures. They were thought to have a sacramental efficacy. Whatever may be said of the mysticism or materialism of this view, we must acknowledge that the aim of devout defenders of the popular worship was high and pure. They maintained that the picture of Christ brought Him near to those who

gazed on it reverently. Theodore writes in the spirit of St. Francis and Thomas à Kempis: "The true Christian is nothing but a copy or impression of Christ," [1] and he quotes Dionysius the Areopagite when he says, "The archetype appears in the image." [2] Unfortunately this line of argument would almost justify idolatry *per se*, when distinguished from fetishism.

[1] Lib. ii. Ep. 22. [2] Lib. ii. Ep. 38.

CHAPTER V

THE PAULICIANS

(*a*) George Monachias; Photius; "Continuator"; Nicetas; Anna Comnena; Michael Psellus; Euthymius, *The Key of Truth*; Petrus Siculus; Zonaras.

(*b*) Gibbon, chap. liv., and Bury, Appendix 6; Finlay, *Byzantine Empire*, Book I. chap. iii.; Smith's *Dictionary of Chr. Biog.*, article "Pauliciani"; F. C. Conybeare, *The Key of Truth*, 1898; Karapet Ter-Urkrttschian, *Die Paulikianer in byzantinischen kaiserreiche*, 1893.

THE Paulicians, to whom Gibbon devotes a whole chapter of his history, have been the most egregiously libelled of all the Christian sects. The orthodox Church accused them of the very scandals that the pagans had imagined with regard to the early Christians, and with no more basis of fact to rest their charges upon. Even ecclesiastics who behaved more reasonably confounded them with the hated Manichæans, or at best with the heretical Marcionites. The simplicity of their religious faith and life, and their rejection of the extravagances and superstitions of the later Church, led to their history and tenets being dragged into theological controversies with which they had no immediate concern, and therefore, of course, to monstrous perversions of them. But quite recently, following minor results of research, Mr. Conybeare has rendered a great service to their memory by his publication and translation of the ancient Paulician work, *The Key of Truth*,[1] together with a valuable historical and critical study of it. We are now able to brush away the libels of centuries and go to an original source for our knowledge

[1] From a MS. written A.D. 1782 and found by Mr. Conybeare in the archives of the Holy Synod of Edimatzin.

of the teachings and practices of these much maligned people.[1]

Beyond the Taurus mountains in the south-east of Armenia there lived during the eighth and ninth centuries a community of Christians cherishing their own discipline, rites, and doctrines apart from the main body of the Eastern Church and all its later developments. These people, who came to be known in the outside world as Paulicians, and who afterwards accepted the title for themselves, owe their original separateness to their geographical seclusion. Therefore it is quite arguable that they should be regarded as representing the survival of a more primitive type of Christianity rather than as the followers of a heresy which sprang up nearer the time when they emerged into the daylight of history, and Mr. Conybeare connects them with the primitive Adoptionists, whose views can be traced back to very early times.[2] The ideas of these people are now to be seen in *The Key of Truth*, which is a book of the Throuraketyi, or Paulicians of *Thouraki*, composed about

[1] The origin of the name "Paulician" is somewhat obscure. There is no foundation for the notion of ninth century polemical writers, that it is to be traced to a Manichæan of the fourth century named Paul, since the Paulicians were certainly not of Manichæan origin. The writer in Smith's *Dictionary of Christian Biography* regards it as a reference to the Apostle Paul. Like the Marcionites, the Paulicians made much of St. Paul's Epistles, and Photius says that they themselves derived their name from the apostle (Photius, ii. 11; iii. 10; vi. 4). Mr. Conybeare derives it from Paul of Samosata, quoting the Armenian writer Gregory Magistros, who says, "Here then you see the Paulicians who got their poison from Paul of Samosata" (*Key of Truth*, p. cv.). In the 19th Canon of Nicæa the followers of Paul of Samosata are called *Pauliani; Pauliciani* is the Armenian form of this name, the "ic" or "ik" being a diminutive introduced in contempt. They did not at first call themselves by the title, but simply designated themselves "Christians." It may have been flung at them by opponents to connect them with the heretic Paul, and subsequently interpreted by them in a new meaning to refer to the apostle and so throw off the libel.

[2] Adoptionism is found in the *Shepherd of Hermas* and other early Church writings, perhaps also in the New Testament, in the discourses of St. Peter (*e.g.* Acts v. 31), which represent the primitive Christology, preceding (1) the miraculous birth idea expressed in the infancy narratives of the first and third Gospels, especially in Luke i. 35, and (2) the still more developed conception of the pre-existent Son of God becoming incarnate, in St. Paul and St. John (*e.g.* Gal. iv. 4; John i. 14).

the year 800. This book reveals a simple Church order with no hierarchy. There is only one grade of the ministry consisting of the "elect," and the ministers are called indifferently by the various titles of apostle, priest, bishop, elder. Admission to the Church is by baptism, which must be sought voluntarily. Infant baptism is repudiated. There is no idea of original sin; therefore infants do not need baptism. The proper time for baptism is the age of thirty. After his baptism, which should be in a river, the Holy Spirit enters the immersed person. There are three sacraments—repentance, baptism, the body and the blood. The latter, the Eucharist, is taken at night, and not separated from the Agape, which is still preserved. Mariolatry and the intercession of saints are rejected; image worship, the use of crosses, relics, incense, candles, and resorting to sacred springs are all repudiated as idolatrous practices. The idea of purgatory is rejected. The holy year begins with the feast of John the Baptist. January 6th is observed as the festival of the baptism and spiritual rebirth of Jesus. *Zatik*, or Easter, is kept on the 14th Nisan. We meet with no special Sunday observances, and possibly the Saturday Sabbath was maintained. There is no feast of Christmas or of the Annunciation.

When we come to consider the question of doctrine, we note that the word "Trinity" never appears in the book. Yet it is to be observed that the rite of baptism consists of one immersion followed by the throwing of three handfuls of water over the candidate. The system is not Marcionite, for it has no traces of Docetism. On the contrary, it is Adoptionist. The Paulicians have been accused of rejecting the Old Testament. But *The Key of Truth* shows that this was not actually the case. It contains quotations from the Old Testament, though these are but few, and its chief authority is the New Testament, the whole of which it accepts. The Paulicians have also been accused of the Manichæism of holding that the world was created by Satan. This is a libel, perhaps to be attributed to their denial that Christ created it.

We can well understand why people holding such

views and carrying on such practices as are here described were persecuted by the Greek Church. In many respects their position resembles that of the iconoclastic emperors, some of whom came from the neighbourhood of the Paulicians and may have been influenced by them. Ancient Oriental Baptists, these people were in many respects Protestants before Protestantism. They held to a simple spiritual conception of Christianity, to a democratic Church order, and to an unorthodox view of the nature of Christ. A dogmatic, hierarchical, ritualistic, superstitious Church could not possibly tolerate them. Their fiercest enemies were the monks, of whom they had no good opinion. They said that the devil's favourite disguise was the appearance of a monk.

The first leader of the Paulicians known to us, commonly regarded as their founder, was Constantine, who came from the village of Mananalis, not far from the cataract of the Euphrates mentioned by Pliny. Like so many other great leaders of religion he received his first impulse from Scripture. A deacon coming home from Syria, where he had been held captive by the Saracens, was hospitably entertained by Constantine, in return for which kindness he gave his host two volumes, one containing the Gospels and the other St. Paul's Epistles. Constantine eagerly devoured them, and they lit in him the fire of missionary enthusiasm. Especially interested in St. Paul, he adopted the name of the apostle's companion Silvanus, started on a tour of preaching about the year 657, and continued his work for some twenty-seven years. Going up the course of the Euphrates, he crossed the great barrier of the Taurus and carried his gospel into more western regions of Asia Minor. He had now left the tolerant rule of the caliphate, which in so far as it gave liberty to the Christians did not trouble itself to distinguish between the sects, regarding orthodoxy and heresy with equal contempt, and he had come within the bounds both of the empire and of the Church. There his success in founding churches of his own persuasion, which he named after St. Paul's churches, was so great that the Emperor Constantine

Pogonatus had his attention directed to it, with the result that he sent an imperial officer named Simeon to the spot to suppress the movement. Constantine Silvanus and many of his followers were arrested. They refused to recant, and their faithful testimony was so striking that it won over Simeon to their side, and he was to be seen later going about as a teacher in the mission under the Pauline name of Silas. Meanwhile Silvanus had been stoned to death, and in the year 690 Simeon and several others among the Paulicians were killed by order of the cruel Emperor Justinian II.

During the next century divisions broke out among the Paulicians. For a time Paul the Armenian—to whose name some trace the title of the sect—was its leader, and on his death each of his sons, Gegnœsius and Theodore, claimed the succession. Gegnœsius, who was the elder, based his claim on appointment by his father. The doctrine of apostolical succession was now creeping into this church, which had stood at first for spirituality and democratic simplicity. But Theodore claimed to receive his grace, as his father had received grace, direct from God. The unseemly disputes that now arose again called the government's attention to the Paulicians, and in the year 722 Gegnœsius was summoned to Constantinople and brought before Leo the Isaurian. It was well for him and his followers that the emperor was the great protestant Iconoclast. Had he been a bigoted champion of orthodoxy it would have gone ill with the Paulicians; but there was much in common between these people and the iconoclastic emperors,[1] and Leo listened to Gegnœsius very tolerantly and could see no harm in his doctrines, nor could the aged patriarch Germanus detect any lurking error in them. The result was that the accused teacher was sent back home with imperial letters for the protection of the Paulicians. Throughout the reigns of the iconoclastic emperors they generally enjoyed imperial favour and were seldom molested.

After a period of depression owing to divisions and

[1] Mr. Conybeare regards the iconoclastic emperors as virtually Paulicians.

unworthy leadership during the latter part of the eighth century, the Paulicians revived at the beginning of the ninth century under the leadership of the good and gifted Sergius. Like Silvanus, this man was led to a new way of life under the influence of the Gospels and the Epistles of Paul, to which he had been referred by a woman member of the sect. He now objected to the orthodox Church on account of its withdrawal of the Scriptures from the attention of the people. As we read this story of Sergius we seem to be anticipating the history of the Reformation, which took the same lines in regard to the Bible.

Sergius followed the curious example of earlier leaders of the sect and took a Pauline name, Tychicus, when he entered on a similar missionary career. He carried on his labours for thirty-four years, visiting almost every part of the central plateaus of Asia Minor. In one of his letters he wrote, "I have run from east to west, and from north to south, till my knees were weary, preaching the gospel of Christ."[1] Meanwhile, like his great predecessor St. Paul, he maintained himself by working with his own hands, his trade being that of a carpenter. This really promised to be a great religious revival. If the iconoclastic party of the government had joined heartily with the spiritual movement among the Paulicians we might have seen a reformation in the East anticipating the Reformation in the West by many centuries. But there was one fatal hindrance to this grand consummation. The methods of force pursued by the imperial government were not such as could effect a real reform of religion. The contamination of unscrupulous politics vitiated the hope of effective improvements and even led to a reversal of policy. Leo the Armenian, although an Iconoclast, endeavoured to strengthen his position by pleasing the Church party in permitting an attack on the Paulicians. It was a wicked course of action, and fatal to any statesmanlike improvement of the situation. So terrible was the persecution which now broke out, that some of the Paulicians murdered

[1] Photius, i. 22.

their judges and then fled out of the empire and took refuge with the Saracens.

Under Michael II. the sect again enjoyed peace, and the influence of Sergius grew and spread. Photius ascribes to him terms of strange elation in saying, "I am the porter and the good shepherd and the leader of the body of Christ and the light of the house of God. I, too, am with you always, even unto the end of the world."[1] But we must be always on our guard against the reports of an enemy, especially when he is also an ecclesiastic.

When the iconoclastic régime was broken, and the orthodox party came back into power under the Empress Theodora (A.D. 842), there was no hope of a just treatment of heretics. Imperial commissioners were now sent into the suspected districts, and those who refused to submit to the Church were condemned to death by hanging, crucifixion, beheading, drowning. The deaths have been reckoned at from 10,000 to 100,000. Again the Paulicians were goaded to measures of retaliation. An officer in the imperial army of the East, named Carbeas, raised a rebellion, and was joined by 5,000 of the troops.[2] He had the best excuse for his action, if civil war is ever permissible, for he had learned that his father had been impaled by the orthodox officials. This barbarous method of execution, which has been frequently practised by the Turks in their recent massacres of Christians, was here adopted by men who pretended to be Christians themselves and who professed to be acting in the interest of a holy Church and in defence of its creed. The maddened insurgents crossed the border of the empire, and with the permission of the caliph fortified the city of Thephrike,[3] which became their headquarters. Thence they issued in raiding parties, with the co-operation of Omar the Emir of Melitene, and repeatedly ravaged the frontier of the empire. Petronas, the brother of Theodora, who was entrusted with the command of the imperial army, could not do more than stand on the defensive. At length Theodora's son, Michael

[1] Photius, i. 21. [2] Continuator, 103. [3] Now *Divigri*.

the Drunkard, led an army in person against the combined Saracens and Paulicians. He was defeated at Samosata and compelled to flee for his life. More than a hundred tribunes were taken prisoners, and those who could not ransom themselves were put to torture. Carbeas was succeeded in the leadership of these fierce, fighting Paulicians by Chrysocheir, who, still in alliance with the Saracens, carried the war into the heart of Asia Minor, as far as the western coast and almost up to Constantinople itself, pillaging Ancyra and Ephesus, Nicæa and Nicomedia. At Ephesus the invaders stabled their horses in the cathedral, and showed the utmost contempt for the pictures and relics, of which they regarded it as the idol temple. The Emperor Basil I. was compelled to sue for peace and to offer a heavy bribe to buy them off. But Chrysocheir scornfully refused his terms and would be satisfied with nothing less than the emperor's retirement to the West and surrender of the whole of the Eastern Empire. Basil had no alternative but to fight. He collected all the available forces of the empire and precipitated them on the rebels.[1] Chrysocheir was taken by surprise and killed while in retreat. Thephrike was deserted by the insurgents, entered by the imperial troops, and laid waste (A.D. 871). It was a complete and final victory for Basil, and it put an end to any further danger of serious invasion. But many of the rebels had escaped to the mountains. There they continued their independence in alliance with the Saracens, and from time to time joined in border raids.

Meanwhile there was another body of Paulicians in Thrace, the descendants and converts of some whom Constantine Copronicus had transported to this part of Europe. These people conformed outwardly with the orthodox Church, and did not attempt any revolt on their own account; but they were credited with sending aid to their more warlike brethren, to whom they stood in the

[1] It is a mistake of the Continuator to suppose that Basil crossed the Euphrates. Failing to take Tephrice, his aim was Melitene, the Saracen stronghold west of the Euphrates. See Anderson in *Class. Rev.*, April 1896, p. 139.

relation of Covenanters to Cameronians, or that of Corsican villagers to the banditti. They assiduously propagated their protestant teaching throughout Thrace; they also sent to Bulgaria missionaries, who were very successful in winning over many of the recent converts of the Greek missionaries. The Paulicians in Thrace were allowed a measure of home rule in return for their services in defence of the empire. They held the city of Philippopolis and occupied a line of villages and castles in Macedonia and Epirus, and the orthodox inhabitants were dominated by them. During the Norman war in the reign of Alexius Comnenus, 2,500 of them deserted. But they were afterwards subdued and punished. Alexius wintered at Philippopolis and devoted himself to arguing with them.[1] So successful was he—according to his daughter—that she styled him "the Thirteenth Apostle." Philippopolis was beautified with gardens for the benefit of those who had succumbed to the arguments of the imperial controversialist; but while they were permitted to remain there, they had lost all power. We must not make too much of the admiring princess' testimony in this matter. Undoubtedly there were many stubborn heretics who could not be persuaded even by an emperor's apostolic eloquence, and probably these people joined the new sects that were now springing up.

One of these sects consisted of the later Euchites, who have been associated with the Paulicians as continuators of the hated heresy. They were scattered over the same districts of Thrace in which the Paulicians had been planted. All that we know of them is dependent on a treatise written by an opponent,[2] who was probably the very man whom the Byzantine government had sent to Thrace to suppress them. We cannot therefore expect an unbiased opinion from such a source. The Euchites were

[1] Anna Comnena, *Alexias*, xv. 9.

[2] Διάλογος περὶ ἐνεργείας δαιμόνων, by Michael Psellus. He was a teacher of philosophy at Constantinople, of wide knowledge on a variety of subjects. His book is a storehouse of information concerning contemporary information. He died A.D. 1105.

charged with the curious dualism of believing in two sons of God. Satanaël the elder corresponds to the Gnostic demiurge, while the younger is Christ to whom heavenly things are assigned. The sect was said to worship both sons, as springing from the same Father. If so, these Euchites could not be Manichæan, and their dualism must be different from the Persian. But some were reported only to reverence the younger son, since he had chosen the better part, the heavenly—still without saying anything ill of the senior; while others were said to honour the elder as the first-born and creator of the world, and even to ascribe envy to the younger son, on account of which he sends earthquakes, hail, pestilence. But this is confusing and uncertain. What seems clear is that the Euchites were an ecstatic sect who attributed great value to long, exciting prayers. We first hear the name as early as the fourth century; and traces of them in Mesopotamia, Syria, and Asia Minor are to be met with again and again during the intermediate ages. There is therefore reason to suppose that they lingered on to the time of the activity of the Paulicians, under whose influence they were quickened into renewed earnestness. If it is true that they held every man to be inhabited by a demon from his birth, they would seem to have accepted a very extravagant doctrine of original sin, which would be in sharp conflict with the belief of the Paulicians, who denied anything of the kind. But demonology was now rampant in Christendom, and people would not look too nicely at the question of consistency in accepting it. Still, if the Euchites held this view, they must not be identified with the Paulicians, who show no trace of it.

Another body commonly associated with the Paulicians, especially in Bulgaria, was that of the *Bogomiles*, or "Friends of God."[1] The fullest account of their tenets is given by Euthymius,[2] according to whom they rejected the Mosaic

[1] Θεόφιλοι.

[2] *Panoplia*, Tit. 23, *Narratio de Bogomilis*. The Princess Anna Comnena will not describe their tenets lest she should *pollute her lips*. She writes: ἵνα μὴ τὴν γλῶτταν μολύνω τὴν ἐμαυτῆς (*Alexias*, xv. 9; vol. ii. p. 357).

writings and the God of the Pentateuch, and regarded the men who are there said to be well-pleasing to Him as inspired by Satan. Thus they invite comparison with the ancient Cainites. But a curious peculiarity in the views of the Old Testament attributed to them by Euthymius is that they reckoned the Psalms and the Prophets among the Christian Scriptures. The Pentateuch is not concerned with the supreme God. It only narrates the doings of His elder son Satanaël, who was originally seated at the right hand of his Father, but was cast out of heaven for plotting a revolt, together with the angels he had corrupted. The creation of the world, including mankind, is his work, except that in order to have men endowed with souls he is compelled to call in the aid of his Father. This he does with the promise that the newly created race shall take the place in the service of the Supreme that has been vacated by the fallen angels. But he cheats his Father by seducing Eve in the form of a serpent, and from her begetting Cain and his twin-sister Calomena. Then Adam begets Abel from Eve. Thus Satanaël is the father of Cain, and Adam the father of Abel, while they both have the same mother, Eve. When the supreme Father discovers the fraud he deprives Satanaël of divinity. But this strange being continues to exert great influence over mankind, and through Moses produces the law which brings many evils on our race. In order to counteract these evils the Father sends forth the *Logos*, who is like Michael, the angel of great counsel, and who enters the Virgin Mary, appears with a phantom human body, teaches the gospel, overcomes Satanaël — afterwards called Satan — ascends to Satanaël's place at the right hand of the Father, and finally sinks into the bosom of the Father, from which He originally came.

Unlike the Paulinists, the Bogomiles rejected water baptism, and allowed only the baptism of Christ as a spiritual baptism, called "exhortation."[1] This was conferred by a rite which consisted in laying the Gospel

[1] παράκλησις.

according to St. John on the head of the candidate, invoking the Holy Spirit, and chanting the Lord's Prayer. Like the Euchites, they attached great value to prayer, which they regarded as the essence of religion in opposition to the Catholic view of the sacrifice of the mass. Here they were Protestant of the Protestants. For as with baptism, so with the Lord's Supper, they repudiated the material elements in the sacrament, and in this respect anticipated the Quakers.

Too much must not be made of these statements in detail. We possess no service book of the Bogomiles, and we have to view them through the coloured glasses of prejudiced antagonism. Still, much of what is attributed to them reads like a revival, or perhaps even a survival, of second century Ophite Gnosticism; and the very antiquity of these notions makes it likely that they were really held by the Bogomiles more or less as described. We can hardly suppose that such old-world fancies would be raked up out of the rubbish heap of a past nearly one thousand years old in order to be gratuitously attributed to them. Therefore it is difficult to resist the conclusion that the Bogomiles must have adopted some system of dualism. On the other hand, there are Armenian scholars who have recently studied the subject, and come to the conclusion that they are not Marcionite. Now we saw that *The Key of Truth* makes it quite certain that the Paulicians were not Marcionite. Yet both have been so regarded in the past. In the Greek historians they are both called Manichæans. That is Anna Comnena's title for all these bodies of heretics—a convenient title because odious. Since we now know that the Paulicians were grossly libelled, we may suspect that the Bogomiles were also more or less seriously maligned. Their dualism was probably less pronounced than has been supposed. Yet, inasmuch as we cannot deny to them something of the kind, we should scarcely class them with the Paulicians. A prominent Paulinist, a physician named Basilius, has been commonly regarded as the leader of the Bogomiles of his day; but

that is an error.[1] This man was closely examined by the Emperor Alexius at Constantinople, and proving true to his faith burnt at the hippodrome. The Princess Anna spreads her description over several pages in dilating on the scene—how the fire was constructed of the biggest trees, and how in every respect this was a magnificent triumph for her father over the horrible heresy. Her filial enthusiasm would be quite touching if it were not so tigerish.[2]

In the year 1140 there was a great stir at the discovery of supposed Bogomile errors in the writings of Constantine Chrysomalus soon after his death, and they were condemned at a synod held under the patriarch Leo Stypiota in Constantinople. According to these writings Church baptism is inefficacious, and nothing done by unconverted though baptised persons is of any value. God's grace is received at the laying on of hands, but only in accordance with the measure of faith. Three years later two Cappadocian bishops were deposed at another Constantinople synod as Bogomiles.[3] As late as the year 1230 the patriarch Gennadius complained of Bogomiles stealing secretly into houses and leading the pious astray. The Albigenses in the West—so cruelly slaughtered in the crusade of Simon de Montford—appear to be more or less closely related to these heretics. Probably they suffered from the same libels. These people may have held theoretical errors. But their real offence was opposition to the sacramental materialism of the Church.

[1] See Bury's Gibbon, chap. liv., Appendix 6.
[2] Anna Comnena, *Alexias*, xv. 9.
[3] Mansi, xxi. 583.

CHAPTER VI

THE GREAT SCHISM

(*a*) Hergenröther, *Photius*, 3 vols., 1867; Ratramnus, *Contra Græcorum Opposita*; Anselm, *De Proc. Spirit. S.*; Mansi, xv. and xvi.

(*b*) Gibbon, chap. lx.; Neale, *History of the Holy Eastern Church*, Introd., vol. ii., 1850; Tondini, *The Pope of Rome and the Popes of the Oriental Church*, 1871; Swete, *Hist. of Doctrine of Procession of the Holy Spirit, etc.*, 1876; Howard, *The Schism between the Oriental and the Western Churches*, 1892; Bréhier, *Le Schisme Oriental du XIme Siècle*, 1899.

THE most momentous fact in the history of Christendom during the Middle Ages is the separation between the Eastern and the Western Churches. When we look at the two great communions, each of which claims to be the one genuine Church, we see them to have so much in common that we may wonder at the absolutely irreconcilable attitude they maintain towards each other. In discipline, ritual, and doctrine they are much nearer together than Roman Catholics and Protestants, nearer even than High Anglicans and Evangelical Churchmen. Both are episcopal, sacerdotal, sacramental, orthodox in relation to the historic creeds. The note of the Eastern Church is said to be orthodoxy and that of the Western catholicity, so that the one is called "The Holy Orthodox Church," and the other "The Catholic Church." To some extent these differences of title are indicative of distinctions in the essential characters of the bodies they represent. The one is especially concerned with the defence of the creed, the other with the maintenance of organic unity. And yet

the Western Church stands for orthodoxy in its proud claim to infallibility, and the Eastern is equally intolerant of heresy, schism, or insubordination. The division followed centuries of close mutual communication, and it was so gradual that much of the common thought and life of the patristic trunk from which they spring is to be found in each of these great branches. As we contemplate them in their stubborn separation we may be reminded of Coleridge's famous metaphor in *Christobel*—

> "They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
> Like cliffs which had been rent asunder,
> A dreary sea now flows between."

In tracing the causes of this tremendous cleavage of Christendom we may be surprised to see how insignificant and unimportant some of them were. A personal quarrel between two patriarchs, a slight step of advance in the implied claims of a title, and last of all, a subtle point in the definition of the Trinity—these are among the influences that in course of time by their cumulative effect scooped out the great chasm, like the water brooks that running for past ages have at length separated whole mountains. Nevertheless, we must not set down the final result to a mere chapter of accidents. The occurrence of various incidents—each in itself apparently so unimportant—in a series coming down several centuries points to the existence of persistent causes lurking beneath. Deep lying, slow moving, gigantic forces, operating through centuries, worked with the inevitability of fate.

1. First among these causes we must place the racial. It is true that the Greek and Latin races were near akin, members of the common Aryan stock which has peopled India, Persia, and Europe. But historically, in the period with which we are concerned, neither of these races was self-contained or unmixed with alien elements. The Latins were invigorated and transformed by an infusion of German blood resulting from successive Gothic invasions. The Greeks, on the other hand, were mingled with a host of

Northern and Oriental races, especially the Sclavs and the Armenians and other peoples of Western Asia. Probably the Greeks were now a minority of the population of Greece, being outnumbered by the Sclavs. Constantinople ceased to be a Greek city except in language and culture. Her citizenship became more Oriental than Greek, and especially Armenian. The strongest rulers of this late Roman Empire which we call Byzantine were natives of Asia Minor. Thus the natural sympathies and affinities of the two branches of the Church tended century by century to mutual estrangement.

We saw how at the beginning the freer Christianity, the Pauline, that which was emancipated from Judaism, was Grecian.[1] First and second century literature in Rome was composed in the Greek language. The churches of Lyons and Gaul were offshoots from the Greek colony at Marseilles, and their famous bishop Irenæus was a native of Greek-speaking Smyrna, who wrote his work *Against Heretics* in Greek. Latin Christian literature first appeared in north Africa a few years later. The great heresies of the Church nearly all sprang from the Eastern branch of the Church, and though at first they flowed to Rome and other Western places, by the middle of the fourth century they were successfully beaten back by the established hierarchial system of the West. The West had its schisms on questions of discipline—first the Novatian, then the Donatist, and its one great heresy, Pelagianism, which was concerned with the human side of religion. The East elaborated the orthodoxy of the Church. The Apostles' Creed grew up in the West, but as a schedule for catechetical teaching, probably originating in earlier Eastern schedules; the West, too—apparently in the monastery at Lerins—gave birth to the Athanasian Creed; but that is rather a hymn to be set by the side of the other great Latin psalm of praise, the *Te Deum*, not properly a Church creed at all. The one test creed is the Nicene, and this is Eastern. Its greatest exponents were in the East. During the fourth

[1] See pp. 3–5.

century and after, in spite of the strength of Ambrose, and the massive genius of Augustine, the intellectual centre of gravity of the Church was in the East. Rome accepted the elaboration of the doctrine of the Trinity from the East. It is true that by a flash of inspired political wisdom she stepped in at the critical moment and said the word that settled the orthodoxy of the whole Church for all subsequent ages; for Leo's *Tome* determined the decision of Chalcedon. But it was the thought which the great pope had received from the East that he was able to enshrine in that immortal document. After this, the West, absorbed in its own practical problems, came to view with weary indifference the hair-splitting controversies of the Eastern Church. She was concerned for orthodoxy, and again and again she struck in with a word of authority to save the situation. But as first the Nestorians by the Euphrates, and then the Monophysites in Egypt and Syria, were cut off, Rome came to have less and less vital connection with what was now essentially the Byzantine Church, identical in area with the Byzantine Empire.

2. A second influence that worked gradually but with inevitable consequences towards this cleavage of the Church was the separation of the Eastern and Western Empires, followed by the slow dissolution of the latter, and then its marvellous resurrection as an independent power, no longer a Roman Empire at all except in name. This process began when the emperors ceased to treat Rome as the centre of government. Diocletian thoroughly Orientalised the administration with its headquarters at Nicomedia. But the most significant fact in this connection was the founding of Constantinople. When Constantine transferred the centre of social influence and intellectual life, as well as the centre of government, from the banks of the Tiber to the shores of the Bosphorus, he began to make a fissure which nothing could stop. Subsequently this severance was widened by the Gothic invasions—the establishment of a Gothic kingdom, only nominally subject to the emperor in the East as its suzerain lord—the failure of the exarch at Ravenna to

shelter Italy from the awful scourge of the Huns—and the success first of Leo, then of Gregory, in stepping into the breach and saving civilisation and the Church, when their professed protector at Constantinople had proved to be an impotent defence. Meanwhile in the East the Church was becoming more and more identified with the empire. There she was tied hands and feet by the imperial will. Emperors and empresses appointed and deposed patriarchs and bishops. The Byzantine Church was being converted into a department of the highly organised bureaucratic Byzantine Empire. Naturally the West asked, Why should the free Latin Church tie itself down to the servile ways of the subject Greek Church? If the emperor could not protect the Church in the West there was no reason why she should not be independent of his servants in the East. When the pope crowned Charles the Great as emperor at Rome on Christmas Day, A.D. 800, he definitely broke with the emperor at Constantinople, in whose eyes the Frank was a usurper. Again the marvellous political insight of Rome proved to be correct. It was useless to look across the Adriatic for protection against the Lombards; then the wise course was to find safety in the rising power across the Alps. But the price for the new alliance had to be paid. Henceforth the papacy, with all its dreams of a universal Church, must content itself in fact with being the dominant influence only in Western churches, and see the other half of Christendom drift wholly out of its sphere of authority.

3. A third influence tending to the severance of the two churches is to be detected in the rivalry between the patriarchates of Rome and Constantinople, and especially in the lofty claims put forth by the papacy. We saw how gravely Gregory the Great had expostulated with John the Faster, when that patriarch had laid claim to the title of "Œcumenical Bishop."[1] Long before this, though not urging precisely the same titular claim, the popes had made great demands on the ground of their succession to the chair of Peter. The council of Sardica (A.D. 344) had

[1] See p. 140.

given a right of appeal on the part of a bishop who had been deposed by his fellow-bishops to Julius the bishop of Rome. But it is a matter of dispute whether this was intended to refer only to this particular pope or also to his successors, and further how far he might take the initiative. It is to be observed that in this council the Eastern as well as the Western Church was represented; there were bishops from Egypt, Arabia, Palestine, Thessaly, and other Oriental districts. But since the Eusebian bishops had withdrawn and Hosius of Cordova was presiding, it is possible that there was a majority of Western bishops when the canon was voted. Then Leo the Great (A.D. 440–461) put forth high papal claims, referring to Peter and *his successors* as constituting the rock on which the Church is founded.[1] Peter is the pastor and prince of the whole Church. To resist his authority is an act of impious pride and the sure way to hell. Considering the many times in which the popes make great demands in various ways, it is difficult to think Gregory the Great wholly disinterested when he rebukes his brother at Constantinople for arrogance in calling himself the "Œcumenical Bishop." Gregory claims some merit for not adopting the title for himself on the ground that it has been allowed to earlier popes; but here he is not accurate, for the previous use of the term has been generic, applying to all the patriarchs,[2] whereas now the question turns on the exclusive use of it for one patriarch in particular.

The conflict between pope and patriarch reached an acute condition in the ninth century. Ignatius, the patriarch of Constantinople, had dared to rebuke the immorality of the Cæsar Bardas, refusing to administer the sacrament to him on Advent Sunday, A.D. 857. No ecclesiastic in the Eastern Church could follow with impunity the bold example of Ambrose in the West, when he stood at his church door and refused admission to the Emperor Theodosius. Ignatius was arrested and im-

[1] *e.g. Letters*, cv., cxx.

[2] See Dudden, *Gregory the Great*, vol. ii. pp. 209 ff.

prisoned on a false accusation of sedition, and in his place the emperor nominated and a synod formally elected a very remarkable man to the headship of the Byzantine Church. This was Photius, who has been greatly maligned by the papal party, but who appears to have been really of high personal character, though haughty and ambitious. Eminent for learning in a church that has prided itself on its scholarship, Photius mentions no less than 280 pagan and Christian authors whose works he has read. He comes only second to John of Damascus among the leading churchmen of the later Byzantine period. If John was the last of the Fathers, Photius may be considered the last of the scholarly leaders of first rank in the Greek Church. His controversial writings reveal intellectual contempt springing from superior knowledge and culture, which he does not scruple to express in dealing with the pretensions of his western rival, the pope, a man his inferior both in learning and in brain power. Here we see the age-long scorn of the finished Greek for the ruder Latin civilisation.

Photius was a layman when he was suddenly called to his lofty post in the Church. But he was a man of noble birth and rank, and he then held the office of chief Secretary of State. He was rushed through the minor orders with a haste that scandalised the proprieties, taking one step a day, till he was promoted to the highest place of all. Ambrose was a layman when he was elected bishop of Milan by acclamation, and though he took some time for preparation and his promotion was not quite so rapid as that of Photius, it was somewhat similar. In both cases, proved ability in the administration of civil affairs was taken as a qualification for the regulation of Church government. But there was one vital difference between the two cases. Ambrose had been elected by the people of Milan in a popular assembly; but Photius was forced on the people of Constantinople by the government.

These high-handed proceedings met with serious opposition, and in order to settle the matter the Emperor Michael invited the pope, Nicholas I., to send delegates to a

general council. This was done, and the council was held at Constantinople in the year 861. It deposed Ignatius, although he had the support of the people, and its decision was ratified by the papal delegates. Then the friends of Ignatius, that is to say, the real representatives of the Greek Church, appealed to the pope, who threw over his delegates, and convoked a synod at Rome, which decided in favour of Ignatius, and pronounced excommunication on Photius in case he should dare to retain the patriarchate (A.D. 863). Photius replied by insisting on the equality in rank of the patriarchs of Rome and Constantinople. The emperor summoned another council at Constantinople four years later, at which the patriarchs of Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem were represented; and this council pronounced a sentence of deposition on the Roman pontiff. But Photius was in a precarious position, only able to hold on by the support of his patron Michael; and when that was removed by the murder of the emperor, he was seized and imprisoned in a convent, and Ignatius restored to the patriarchate. In the year 869 a council was held in St. Sophia, which the Latins reckon as the "Eighth Œcumenical Council." It condemned Photius and confirmed the right of Ignatius to be patriarch of Constantinople.

This miserable quarrel ended happily. The rival patriarchs were both really good men, and ultimately they were reconciled. Even Ignatius, who had owed so much to the papacy, could not endure the arrogant interference of Pope John VIII. with the missionary work which the Greek Church was carrying on in Bulgaria with remarkable success; and the pope had threatened to excommunicate him too, when death removed him from his difficulties (Oct. 23, 877). Three days later Photius was quietly restored to the patriarchate. It was not to be expected that the pope would find him more complacent. In the year 879, a council, three times as large as Ignatius's council, met with much pomp in St. Sophia, pronounced the previous council a fraud, re-affirmed the Nicene Creed without the *Filioque* clause on which the Latins were in-

sisting, and ended by eulogising the virtues and learning of Photius. This council is sometimes reckoned by the Orientals as the "Eighth Œcumenical Council," though generally only seven general councils are allowed in the East. Thus if an eighth is to be counted at all—and that is the case definitely in the Roman Church, though less decisively in the Greek—it is taken differently in the West and in the East. With the Latins it is Ignatius's council of A.D. 869; with the Greeks it is Photius's council of A.D. 879. The papal delegates assented to the decision of the latter council, and deceived the pope on their return to Rome by representing that it had conceded his Bulgarian claims. When he learnt the truth and discovered that it had done nothing of the kind, he pronounced an anathema on Photius for deceiving and degrading the Holy See. But it does not appear that the patriarch had had any share in the diplomacy which the papal legates had practised. Photius ended his days in learned leisure at a monastery, and died in the year 891. The feud between the two churches now went on and it only ended with final and complete severance.

4. The last stage of the long quarrel was concerned with the controversy on the *Filioque* clause of the Nicene Creed. The irony of history is nowhere more apparent than in the fact that the chief difference between the two great historic churches is so fine a point of doctrine that ordinary people could never guess its supposed importance. Nobody could pretend to decide it without penetrating into the profound mystery of the Being of God. Both churches accept the Nicene Creed as confirmed in the great Church councils; both are loyal to the idea of the *homousion*, and to the full Divinity of the Holy Spirit as well as that of the Son; both are thoroughly Trinitarian. But while the Eastern Church maintains that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father alone though *through* the Son, the Western Church contends that He proceeds from the Father and also *from* the Son as a joint source. Not only does the Greek Church object to the latter idea, it

accuses the Latin Church of a wrong action in venturing to insert a word in the venerated Nicene Creed. The clause in the Latin version asserting the procession of the Holy Spirit originally ran: "*Qui ex patre procedit.*" The Roman Church now renders this clause: "*Qui ex Patre Filioque procedit.*" The insertion of *Filioque* at this point in the creed became the chief ground of division between the two churches, and it has remained so down to the present day without any hope of reconciliation, each community anathematising the other on account of the fine point of doctrine.

As with most controversies, it was possible for each party to point to testimony in the writings of venerated Fathers of antiquity that seemed to favour its own specific contention. That is nearly always the case, because it is controversy that sharpens definitions; and inasmuch as there is certainly something to be said for both sides of an argument in which sincere and able men are engaged, it is pretty certain that before the ideas crystallise on one side or the other they will be found in a mixed state of solution. Thus Tertullian in the West seemed to favour what was adopted later as the Eastern view, when he said, *Spiritum non aliunde puto quam a Patre per Filium*,[1] and Hilary of Poitiers, the most important literary defender of the Nicene Creed in the West during the fourth century, writes, *Loqui de Eo* (*i.e.* the Holy Spirit) *non necesse est, Qui a Patre et Filio auctoribus confitendus est*,[2] and at the close, referring to the Holy Spirit, he says, *ex te per unigenitum suum*;[3] and again explicitly, *A Patre procedit Spiritus Sanctus, sed a Filio et a Patre mittitur*.[4] On the other hand, Athanasius in the East seems to anticipate the Western view when he writes, "The Word gives to the Spirit, and whatever the Spirit hath, He hath from the Word."[5] This may not refer to original being. St. Basil is more definite, writing, "Since the Holy Spirit . . . de-

[1] *Adv. Praxean.* 4. [2] *De Trin.* ii. 29. [3] *Ibid.* xii. 57.
[4] *Ibid.* viii. 20—an important passage discussing this very question.
[5] *Cont. Ar.* iii. 25.

pendeth [1] from the Son, and hath His being dependent [2] from the Father as its cause, whence also He proceedeth." [3] The latter part of this sentence would appear to favour the Eastern view. Nevertheless in another place Basil writes, "God generates, not as man, but truly generates. And that which is generated of Him sends forth the Spirit through His mouth." [4] On the other hand, Gregory Nazianzen definitely asserts that the Spirit proceeds from the Father only.[5]

Ambrose appears to be the first to teach in express terms that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. Thus he writes, "The Holy Spirit also when he proceeds from the Father and the Son,[6] is not separated from the Father, is not separated from the Son"; [7] and Epiphanius frequently teaches that the Holy Spirit is from both.[8]

Augustine frequently teaches that the procession is from both the Father and the Son.[9] As yet, however, nobody had ventured to tamper with the venerated creed so as to insert this idea into it. As far as has yet been pointed out, "the first known instance in which the *Filioque* was inserted into the Processional Clause of the Symbol" [10] is at the third council of Toledo (A.D. 589). It reappears in the fourth (A.D. 633) and sixth (A.D. 638) councils of Toledo. The doctrine was received in England at the council of Hatfield (A.D. 680). Passing on to the eighth century, we find Tarasius in his letter announcing his elevation to the patriarchate of Constantinople writing of the Holy Spirit as "proceeding from the Father through the Son"—the Greek doctrine. This expression was

[1] ἤρτηται. [2] ἐξημμένον. [3] *Epis.* xxxviii. 3.
[4] *Adv. Eunomium.* [5] *Orat.* 1; *De Filio*, 1.
[6] *Cum procedit a Patre et Filio.* [7] *De Sp. S.* i. 10.
[8] παρά (*Ancor.* lxvii.), ἐξ (*Hær.* lxxiv. 7) of Both, and παρά of the Father, but ἐξ of the Son (*Ancor.* viii. 9).
[9] e.g. *Trin.* xv. 48 and *passim.*
[10] Howard, *The Filioque and the Schism*, pp. 18, 19—a book to which I am indebted for much information on this subject, and the quotations given above.

vehemently disputed in the *Caroline Books*—theological writings claiming the sanction of Charles the Great, who forwarded them to Pope Hadrian, and the controversy was now fully alive. After a council at Aix-la-Chapelle (A.D. 809), Charles sent legates to confer with the pope (Leo III.) on the subject. Leo, while approving of the doctrine, hesitated about the insertion of it in the venerated creed. Four years later the council of Arles formally sanctioned the double procession.

After this, when the quarrel broke out between Photius and Nicolas, the patriarch charged the Roman Church with heresy for accepting what he reckoned an error in the Western doctrine concerning the Holy Spirit. Still, in spite of this difficulty and all other grounds of quarrel, there was no formal severance between the two churches till the middle of the eleventh century. Meanwhile the clause which was the source of so much contention was being gradually adopted by all the local churches in the West. It is a question whether the insertion of it in the creed was ever formally authorised by the Church of Rome in a council at which the pope was represented.[1]

We now approach the final rupture. Michael Cerularius, who was ordained patriarch of Constantinople in the year 1043, addressed an encyclical letter to the bishops of Apulia, some nine or ten years later, in which he sought closer union with the Western Church, at the same time mentioning some of the difficulties in the way of such union, the chief of which was the Western use of unleavened bread at the Eucharist.[2] The last item that he referred to was the Dogma of the Procession from the Son. This letter fell into the hands of the pope, Leo IX., who addressed a reply to the patriarch in a very different spirit, ending with a threat that if necessary he would not "Seethe the kid in its mother's milk," but "scrub its mangy hide with biting vinegar and salt."[3] The patriarch

[1] Dr. Döllinger attributed the insertion of it to Pope Benedict VIII. on the demand of the Emperor Henry II., in A.D. 1014. See Howard, *op. cit.* p. 38.

[2] *Pro eo maximo, quod de azymis,* etc. [3] Mansi, xix. 649.

refusing to submit to the pope's directions, the papal legates formally laid on the altar of St. Sophia a sentence of anathema denouncing eleven evil doctrines and practices of Michael and his supporters, and cursing them with the awful imprecation: "Let them be Anathema Maranatha, with Simoniacs, Valerians, Arians, Donatists, Nicholaitans, Severians, Pneumatomachi, Manichees, and Nazarenes, and with all heretics; yea, with the devil and his angels. Amen. Amen. Amen" (July 16, A.D. 1054). The schism was now complete.

The modern mind is naturally amazed that so huge a disaster to Christendom could be seriously promoted by so fine a point of controversy as the *Filioque* clause. We have seen that this was by no means the only ground of contention. It was but the last ingredient in a bitter cup which the Eastern Church refused to take from the hands of overbearing Roman prelates. Then we must remember that, all along, the deplorable mistake of substituting doctrinal orthodoxy for personal faith was maintained by both branches of the Church. Nor was the doctrinal point under dispute without what people thought to be serious consequences. Some have revived it in recent times. When the idea of the immanence of God has suggested that the Divine presence could be secured without the mediation of Christ, it has been argued that the Spirit of God comes to us from Christ; that otherwise the special Christian gospel would vanish. But this was not the question at the time of the dispute. It was not how we receive the Spirit; but how the mysterious existence of the Third Person in the Trinity comes to be in itself. The Greeks allowed that we receive the Spirit through Christ. Still their opponents thought that the honour of Christ was involved in the controversy. It was in the West, in St. Augustine and the Athanasian Creed, for example, that the absolute equality of the Son with the Father was emphasised. The *Filioque* clause seemed to agree with that equality, the Greek rejection of the clause to discredit it.

CHAPTER VII

THE CRUSADES

(*a*) Official reports and letters from individual Crusaders; Fulcher, *Gesta Peregrinantium Francorum*, the diary of a witness; Albert of Aix, *Chronicle*, second-hand, from eye-witnesses, with masses of details uncritically handled; William of Tyre, *Historia Rerum in partibus transmarinis gestarum*, also in touch with eye-witnesses, and using written sources, a book composed with discrimination and literary skill, but mingling legend, toned down, with historical fact—the Herodotus of the Middle Ages; Anna Comnena, *Alexias*; Nicetas, *Historia; Chronicles of the Crusades* (Bohn); *The Chronicle of Morea* (14th century; ed. Schmidtt).

(*b*) Gibbon, chaps. lviii.–lxi.; Michaud, *History of the Crusades* (Eng. trans.), popular, rich in incident, untrustworthy; H. von Sybel, *History and Literature of the Crusades* (Eng. trans., edited by Lady Duff Gordon), a valuable critical study; Archer and Kingsford, *The Crusades* ("Story of the Nations"); S. Lane Poole, *Saladin, and the Fall of the Kingdom of Jerusalem.*

FOR the most part the Crusades have been studied from the standpoint of Western Europe, since it was there that they originated. Instigated by the Latin Church, they were carried on by swarms of devotees, fanatics, penitents, and adventurers from France, Germany, Italy, England. While the goal of their enterprise was in the East, and while the people most seriously affected by their achievements were Orientals, the Eastern Church and Empire took but a small part in the actual movement, which was a great upheaval and eruption of Western Christendom. Nevertheless, it falls in with the object of the present volume to study the Crusades from the novel standpoint of that half of Christendom which was the witness of the romantic

feats of chivalry that adorned these quaint wars fought on its own soil. Too often it was the victim of their disastrous consequences. What did the Crusades mean to the Eastern Church? Did they bring it liberation, security, prosperity? That is the question which forces itself upon us when we plant ourselves in imagination at Constantinople or Antioch, at Tyre or Jerusalem, and watch the sanguinary fights of Latins and Teutons with Turks and Saracens.

If we would take a broad view of the situation, we must not be satisfied to regard the Crusades either as mere freaks of fanaticism, or as only European police manœuvres for the protection of pilgrims. Their immediate object was recovery of the sacred sites of Palestine from desecration by the infidels, and their direct provocation was the ill-treatment at times endured by people who visited those sacred sites. Palmers' tales told by the fireside and in the market-place stirred the minds of men in the towns and villages of Europe. But when we orientate the whole movement we see that these wars take their place in the age-long conflict between Islam and Christendom. That conflict began in the seventh century when Mohammed started on his conquering career; it will not cease till the cross is seen again on the dome of St. Sophia in place of the usurping crescent, till the last Turkish sultan is dethroned, and the last Turkish pasha dismissed. Nevertheless these strange enterprises had their own peculiar features, which happily are without parallel in history; for the world has never seen less wisdom or greater incompetence, attended by more waste of life and deeper misery, in proportion to the purpose pursued and the end accomplished.

In their actual inception the Crusades sprang from the pilgrimages. As early as the fourth century a continuous stream of immigrants from Western Europe was pouring into Palestine. Some came and went, like the modern tourists; others remained to live and die in the Holy Land. When Jerome settled down for life in a cave at Bethlehem, the fame of so eminent a man induced many to follow his example. Under his influence Paula came from Rome, and

being a woman of social position and religious reputation, she induced many other Roman ladies to join her. There were two colonies of ascetics from Italy—one of men, and the other of women—settled in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem. These processes — the settling of immigrants and the pilgrimages of temporary visitors — continued without intermission except in times of war. Thus Western Europe was always in touch with the East. In the break-up of civilisation and the consequent deepening ignorance of the Dark Ages, the value of relics as fetishes rose; and then those primary but untransferable relics, the scenes of our Lord's birth at Bethlehem, and death and burial at Jerusalem, came to be adored pre-eminently.

The Persian occupation in the sixth century only put a temporary check to the pilgrimages; and the Mohammedan conquest of the country, which followed so soon after its recovery by Heraclius, hindered them much less than might have been expected, for the early caliphs were more tolerant of unbelievers than the Christian emperors of heretics. Especially was this the case with the enlightened and mild caliphs of the Fatimite line who resided in Egypt, and it was a good thing for the pilgrims that Jerusalem came under their authority and protection. One short interval of fearful persecution occurred under the mad caliph, El-Hakim, who ended by outraging the principles of his fellow-Mohammedans, in proclaiming himself the creator of the universe, and was slain by order of his sister as a menace to Islam. This terrible man had most cruelly oppressed both the Jews and the Christians under his power. It is said that in the year 1010 he ordered the destruction of the Holy Sepulchre; if so, his order could not have been effectually executed.

A far worse calamity was soon to follow. The Turks swarmed over Syria and Asia Minor, defeating the effeminate Arab caliphs of the Abbasside line. Toghrul, the grandson of Seljuk, had adopted Mohammedanism,[1] and in

[1] Michael the Syrian gives three reasons for the ready amalgamation of the Turks with the Arabs and their speedy adoption of Islam—(1) their

the year 1055, after conquering Persia and regions farther west, he was appointed sultan, or vice-regent for the caliph. This man was succeeded by his nephew, Alp Arslan, who conquered Armenia and defeated the Emperor Romanus Diogenes at the battle of Manzikert (A.D. 1071). All Anatolia was now at the mercy of the Turks, who continued to press north and west till they threatened Constantinople. In the year 1081 the sultan fixed his headquarters at Nicæa, the sacred centre of Christian orthodoxy. Happily for the world the confusion into which the Byzantine Empire had been thrown by the defeat of Romanus was now subsiding, and a strong prince, Alexius Comnenus, was on the throne. But he could do little to stem the spreading flood of barbarism. A ghastly peril threatened the remnant of the empire of the Cæsars. The Arabs had received culture from Greeks and Persians; and their policy had become pacific and moderately liberal. But the Turks were fierce, brutal Mongols from Central Asia, little better than savages, spreading destruction and ruin in their path. Their capture of Syria and Asia Minor threatened the ruin of civilisation throughout those regions which for centuries had been in the van of human progress. Happily they soon came to some extent under Persian civilising influences, or all would have been lost.

In his despair the emperor sent urgent requests to Europe for assistance. Doubts have been thrown on a letter he is said to have addressed to Robert, Count of Flanders — a brother-in-law of William the Conqueror, especially for the reason that in it Alexius mentions the beauty of the women of Constantinople as an inducement for the warriors of the West to come to the rescue of his city. The letter exists in several forms, and therefore manifestly it has been tampered with. While we cannot be sure of its original features in every particular, there can

own earlier Monotheism; (2) the fact that they found Turkish immigrants already settled in Persia, which had been won over by the Mohammedan power some time previously; (3) the service of Turks as mercenaries in the army of the caliph, *Chronicle* (ed. Chabot), vol. iii., p. 156.

be no reasonable doubt that the emperor did write some such letter, appealing for aid in his desperate need. "From Jerusalem," he says, "to the Ægean, the Turkish hordes have mastered all; their galleys, sweeping the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, threaten the imperial city itself, which, if fall it must, had better fall into the hands of Latins than of pagans."[1]

Here then was a new motive for the Crusades unexpectedly sprung upon the Western world. Had Constantinople fallen into the hands of the Turks nearly four centuries earlier than the actual time of that fate, and this when the Asiatic invaders were flushed with their recent victories in Asia Minor, and before the kingdoms of Europe had become consolidated and strengthened as great national powers, it is difficult to see what could have prevented the westward rush of the devastating flood from sweeping over all Christendom, and reducing Italy and France to the condition of Syria and Anatolia. From this threatened doom of Christianity and civilisation the world was saved by the earlier Crusades. That, and not the sentimental glory of the recovery of the sacred sites, or the pitiable achievement of the temporary establishment of the little, shadowy kingdom of Jerusalem, is their supreme, their one solid result. Yet, stupendous as this task was and momentous as its consequences were, the thought of it was by no means uppermost in the minds of the Crusaders. They were jealous of the Greeks, as uneducated people commonly are jealous of their more cultivated neighbours, especially when the latter display the airs of superior persons, as the Greeks were only too ready to do. Besides, were not these Byzantine heretics excommunicated and cursed by the holy pope? The behaviour of the Crusaders at Constantinople and other Eastern cities was scarcely that of a lifeboat crew saving the victims of a shipwreck; nor did the people they rescued evince much gratitude towards their deliverers. The character and conduct of many of

[1] Martene, *Thesaur.* p. 266 ff. Cf. for the Abbott Guilbert's account of this celebrated letter, "Lappenberg" in *Pertz. Archiv.* vi. p. 630.

the Crusaders rendered them perfectly odious to the men and women on whom they were billeted. The whole matter is very complicated. Still, when we consider the course of events, we must come to the conclusion that for history the supreme significance of the Crusades lies in the fact that they put a check on the Turkish advance, and so effectually broke its power that the fatal consequences momentarily threatened were for ever prevented. He who believes that God is in history will see the fanaticism of relic worship overruled for the deliverance of Christendom from total destruction.

While the appeal of Alexius and the thundercloud in the East to which it pointed may have furnished the motives of statesmen, it was the maltreatment of holy pilgrims and the desecration of holy sites that roused the passion of the multitude. In this age of relic worship it was intolerable that infidels should hold the most sacred of all relics—the cave in which the Saviour was born, the Cross on which He had died, and the tomb in which He was buried. A practical age will smile at the fanaticism of such a thought rousing Europe to a war fever. But it has been justly observed that we have here a rare instance of warfare waged for an idea. For this reason we may perceive in the inception of the Crusades the poetry of chivalry, as we see in the legends that followed them its romance; unhappily, when we come to study the grim story of the actual events, poetry and romance vanish in horrors of carnage.

The popes have the credit of originating the Crusades and of being their chief promoters. The earliest effort of the kind has been sought in a letter ascribed to Pope Sylvester II., about the year 1000, in the midst of the crisis of gloom and terror when people were expecting the end of the world. This letter is addressed to all Christians in the name of the church at Jerusalem, beseeching them to pity the miseries of the Holy City and come to its rescue with money if not with arms; but its

genuineness cannot be sustained.[1] Gregory VII., the great Hildebrand (A.D. 1073–1085), seriously purposed inaugurating a crusade, and was only hindered from doing so, after 50,000 pilgrims had agreed to follow him, by the complication of affairs in Europe that demanded his attention. He said, "He would rather expose his life to deliver the holy places than live to command the entire universe." Had this remarkable man devoted his genius and energy to the enterprise, no doubt great results would have been achieved. But the actual origination of the first Crusade was the work of Urban II. (A.D. 1088–1099), who held a council at Piacenza, in which he broached the scheme, and then, crossing the Alps, convened a larger and more representative council at Clermont (November 1095), where, after the settlement of French affairs, he called upon the people of Europe to aid him in rescuing the Holy Sepulchre. The popular imagination has seized on Peter the Hermit, who came from Amiens, as the real inspirer of the Crusades, and Michaud has written a dramatic description of the interview between this strange person and Urban at Clermont, in which the pope takes quite the second place; but that conversation is wholly imaginary. Peter was not even present at the council. The organisation and spread of the movement through Europe must be attributed to the pope. On the other hand, we should beware of the modern tendency to undervalue Peter's influence. An enthusiast of intense fervour, he set all the northern parts of France on fire with his passionate eloquence as he rode about from town to town, bareheaded and barefooted, carrying a huge cross before him, and preaching in churches and streets and highways. Everywhere his proposal was entertained with enthusiasm as from the call of heaven. *Deus vult, Deus vult*, cried the educated ecclesiastics in the council; *Dieu la volt, Dieu la volt*, echoed the rustics in their vernacular. The council freed the Crusaders from taxes, and ordered that debtors who joined their ranks should not be pursued. An extraordinary assortment of

[1] *Ep.* cvii. in Bouquet, x. 426.

people rushed into the enterprise, including old men, women with children, prostitutes.

Peter and his horde of peasants were too impatient to wait for the lords and knights who were coming together in military array. Without any organisation or commissariat the simple multitude set out for their tremendous walk in the spring of the year 1096. After they had crossed Austria and passed the confines of civilisation, they still had 600 miles of forest and wilderness to traverse in Hungary and Bulgaria before they could reach Constantinople. They came on like a swarm of locusts eating up the countries they passed through. We can neither blame them nor the people of these lands when we see that raids of hunger provoked retaliation and slaughter. The multitude was divided into two parts for better provisioning—half under Peter, and half under another leader, Walter the Penniless. They were in a pitiable plight when they reached Thrace, and all might have perished if the Emperor Alexius had not sent to rescue them.

We can understand with what disgust the citizens of Constantinople viewed the approach of the ragged host. Alexius was glad to ship them across the Bosphorus as quickly as possible. There they would have been killed outright, if it had not been for the dissentions that had broken out among the Turks. But even as things were, a great number—Gibbon accepts the figure at "three hundred thousand"—perished before a single city was rescued from the infidels.

In August a more regular army followed, under Hugh the Great, Count of Vermandois; Robert of Normandy, the eldest son of William the Conqueror; Stephen of Chartres, said to own as many castles as there are days of the year; Raymond of many titles; Bohemond, son of Robert Guiscard; Tancred, the perfect knight of chivalry celebrated in Tasso's poem; but, above all, Godfrey of Bouillon, Duke of Lorraine, a man who combined a spirit of genuine, unselfish religious devotion with the talents of a great

general. Even this army was ill-organised under its several leaders, and the undisciplined footmen immensely outnumbered the knights on horseback. Like the ragged regiments of their precursors, these troops also came through Germany and Hungary, and were admitted into Constantinople with fear and suspicion. Crossing the Hellespont, they defeated the Turks at Nicæa. Then they divided. One body struck off east under Baldwin and conquered Edessa. The main army proceeded to Antioch, which fell after a fearful siege, both sides having suffered very heavily.[1] At length Jerusalem was surrounded, besieged, and taken (July 15, 1099).[2] Then, with lighted torches, but still among scenes of blood, the Crusaders made their way to the goal of their difficult undertaking—the Holy Sepulchre. Part of the supposed cross, still contained in its silver casket, was recovered and borne with singing in procession to "the temple." "And all the people went after, which wept for pitie, as much as if they had seen the Saviour Jesus Christ still hanging on the Cross. They all held them for much recompense of a great treasure that our Lord had thus discovered."[3]

Godfrey of Bouillon was elected king of Jerusalem; and, though he declined the honour of the title as unworthy to hold it, he accepted the actual rule.[4] Godfrey died the next year, and his brother Baldwin, when summoned from Edessa to succeed him, being less scrupulous, allowed himself to be crowned at Bethlehem (A.D. 1100). Thus there was founded the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem.

The sequel is an anti-climax. Having accomplished the end of their vow, the mass of the surviving Crusaders returned home, and the leaders who remained in charge of the chief cities that had been captured—Jerusalem, Antioch, and Edessa—found to their dismay that they were left stranded, like shipwrecked sailors on three desert islands. Both politically and ecclesiastically their position was altogether anomalous. They had formally submitted to the Greek

[1] See William of Tyre, pp. 84–143.
[2] *Ibid.* pp. 167–188. [3] *Ibid.* p. 194. [4] *Ibid.* pp. 192, 193.

emperor as the condition of being permitted to pass through his territory; but in reality they showed him no fealty whatever, but behaved as foreign princes colonising a land that they had won by the sword. This was the political position. The ecclesiastical was not more satisfactory. They were now in the region of the Eastern Church; yet they owned allegiance to the pope, whose supremacy that Church did not recognise and who had denounced it as heretical. In the eyes of the patriarch of Constantinople the Crusaders were both schismatics and heretics. Their subsequent conduct did not lead the Greek Church to view them with favour; for they abandoned themselves to the pleasures and luxuries of Oriental life. A Latin patriarchate was founded at Jerusalem, with Dagobert, a haughty, ambitious prelate, as its first occupant, having four archbishoprics and a number of bishoprics under him.

The kingdom of Jerusalem lasted for nearly a century; but during much of this time it was in a state of degeneration and decay. The descendants of the Crusaders, called *Pulleni*, were for the most part a weak and worthless race, rendered effete by luxury and self-indulgence. Damascus was still unconquered. In the year 1146 Edessa was recaptured by the Saracens. Then Europe was alarmed, and a second Crusade was projected and inspired by a much greater man than any of the originators of the first —Bernard of Clairvaux, the reformer of monasticism and restorer of the papacy to its power and dignity. The earlier Crusade had not seen any sovereign at its head. But this new movement was led by both Louis VII., king of France, and the German emperor, Conrad III. It proved to be a dismal failure. The Greeks were now more than timorous and suspicious; they actually opposed the defenders of Christendom. There is good reason to believe that the Emperor Manuel, a warrior of gigantic personal prowess, entered into secret communications with the sultan and treacherously misled the Crusaders. Be that as it may, the siege of Damascus failed, and the princes returned home having effected nothing.

Nevertheless for two centuries the idea of the Crusades was kept alive in Europe, and every spring saw fresh bodies of men sewing the cross in gold, or silk, or cloth on to their garments, and setting out for the holy war. It was a great calamity that originated the next extensive movement of this kind—known as the third Crusade. In October 1187, Jerusalem fell into the hands of the Sultan Saladin. This roused the old Emperor Frederick Barbarossa to go himself to recover the Holy City. He defeated the sultan at Iconium, but was drowned in attempting to ford the river Calycadnus (A.D. 1190). Richard I. of England now became the chief leader of the Crusade, amid great difficulties caused by the jealousies of other princes and his own inconsiderate eagerness, for he was but a glorified schoolboy. Richard and Saladin — who was neither a Turk nor an Arab, but a Kurd, and therefore, like the Crusaders themselves, of the Aryan stock—came to terms, which left Jerusalem in the hands of the courteous Moslem, but allowed the Christians possession of the Holy Sepulchre and the right of pilgrimage there.

The story of the fourth Crusade might well be told with tears of shame and humiliation for the disgrace which it was to Christendom. In the year 1217 Innocent III. summoned the nations to yet another attempt to rescue the holy sites from the possession of the infidel. No emperor or king now responded. There was no great Bernard to inspire enthusiasm. But a preacher of a distinctly lower type, Fulco of Neuilly, succeeded in obtaining support from a number of French nobles, who involved themselves in unworthy obligations to blind Dandolo, the patriotic doge of Venice. He would supply them with ships if they would do his business for him. Venice was now quarrelling with Constantinople, and the Crusaders consented to begin their expedition with an attack on their fellow-Christians, the Greeks. They first took Zaras and then sailed up to the very walls of Constantinople, gazing with wonder on the gilt domes and spires of its 500 churches. The Crusaders—we should say, the invaders—

were accompanied by young Alexius, son of the Emperor Isaac, who had been blinded and imprisoned by his brother Alexius Angelus, now usurping the throne. Thus their expedition might be compared to the French aid offered to the Pretender in England. But while this gave some face to the invasion, the sequel showed that it was really an outbreak of the long smouldering enmity between the East and the West.

At the approach of the Latins the timid Greek troops and their emperor fled from the camp where they had assembled with a view of opposing the Crusaders. After an easy siege the gates were thrown open, and the Latins entered the city in triumph. They so far carried out their programme as to release the imprisoned ex-Emperor Isaac and crown the young Alexius, together with his father, at St. Sophia. The junior emperor had promised that when his father and he were restored he would put an end to the schism which separated the Greeks from the Latin Church. Isaac was obliged to consent to this and other humiliating conditions—namely, a money payment of 200,000 silver marks, and the rescue of the Holy Land. But the difficulties in the way of fulfilling his promises were very great. A considerable sum of money was paid over at once to the Crusaders; but no serious steps were taken to unite the divided churches. Before long the Latin visitors became very unpopular. They were pressing their demands with imperious insolence, forcing their way into the palace, and threatening the timorous Alexius that they would no longer recognise his sovereignty if he did not comply. But that was beyond his power. When the people perceived his helplessness, they besieged the Senate clamouring for another emperor. A time of confusion followed, in which young Alexius was strangled, and his father, blind Isaac, died of fright. The Latins then took Constantinople by storm under the Marquis of Montferrat. The city was sacked. Many of its priceless treasures were carried off to Europe; more were destroyed. The patriarch fled on an ass without

a single attendant. The sacred vessels in the churches were turned into drinking cups. Icons, even portraits of Christ, were used as gaming tables. At St. Sophia the splendid altar was broken in pieces, and a harlot, whom Nicetas calls "a minion of the furies," seated herself on the patriarch's throne, and sang and danced in the church, ridiculing the Greek hymns and processions. It was a scene of outrage and profanity anticipating Paris at the Revolution.[1]

A Latin Empire was now set up at Constantinople with Baldwin of Flanders as its first emperor (A.D. 1204). The Pope Innocent III. at first expressed strong disapproval of the perversion of a Crusade against the infidels into a war of conquest fought with Christians. But these Greek Christians were heretics and schismatics, and when he saw the great city of Constantinople brought under Latin authority he sent the pallium to the new patriarch, Thomas Morosini, a Venetian, and boasted that at last Israel, after destroying the calves at Dan and Bethel, was again united to Judah. Of course this was no real end to the separation of the two churches. Among the Greeks the Latin patriarch was regarded as an intruder; he was only recognised by the dominant invaders from Europe. The rule of the Franks at Constantinople lasted for about sixty years; but it was no credit to its unscrupulous founders. At length, with the aid of the Genoese, Michael VIII. (Palæologus) expelled them and restored the Greek Empire (A.D. 1261).

Meanwhile the Crusades went on as an intermittent stream of warriors pouring over from Europe into Egypt and Syria. In the year 1228 the German emperor, Frederic II., driven to make good his word by threats of excommunication from Pope Gregory IX., after much procrastination, set off for the Holy Land, where by good fortune he found that the Sultan Camel of Egypt was engaged in war with his nephew, and therefore willing to make terms with the Franks. This Mussulman ruler

[1] Nicetas, p. 757 ff.

granted them a considerable part of the Holy Land, including Jerusalem. Frederic claimed the kingdom through Iolanthe, whom he had recently married, and placed the crown on his own head in the church of the Holy Sepulchre. But his troubles with the pope compelled him to return home the next year.

The last Crusade of importance was undertaken by Louis IX. of France, a man of deep personal piety, who deservedly earned the name of Saint Louis. Jerusalem had been conquered and the inhabitants most horribly treated by a rude tribe from the steppes of Asia, the Chowaresmians, who, having fled before the Mongols, were lured by the Egyptian Sultan Ayoub to serve as his mercenaries. The Christian dominion was now restricted to Acre. Louis landed in Egypt in A.D. 1249, suffered defeat, and was taken prisoner. Ransomed at a great price, he sailed for Acre the next year; but he could do little, and he was compelled to return home in the year 1254. A later attempt by St. Louis to break the Mohammedan power at Tunis proved also to be a failure. Acre fell in the year 1291, and with its fall the last remnant of the Latin power in the East vanished. Henceforth all Palestine remained under the rule of Islam.

CHAPTER VIII

THE GREEK CHURCH AT THE FALL OF THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE

(*a*) Anna Comnena, *Alexias*; Nicetas, *Historia, de Rebus post C. P.* etc.; Pachymer; Nicephoras Gregoras; Ducas; Chalcondyles; Phranza; and new sources later than Gibbon, especially Nicolo Barbaro, *Giornale dell' Assedio di Constantinopoli*—the diary of a besieged resident; and Critobulus, *Life of Mahomet* (*Βίος τοῦ Μωαμέδ β'*).

(*b*) Gibbon, chaps. lxi.–lxviii.; Bury, *Later Roman Empire*; Oman, *Byzantine Empire*; Pears, *Destruction of the Greek Empire*, 1903; *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien*, 1re Année, 1896, No. 3, 1.

THE decay of the Byzantine Empire involved the orthodox Church in two serious calamities. The Turkish victories brought disaster to those Christians who looked on Constantinople as the metropolis of their religion, over and above the ruin of the State of which the same city was the capital and at times almost the whole territory. That was bad enough. But the mischief was aggravated by the schism which divided the Eastern Church from the papal Church of the West. As we saw in the previous chapter, under these circumstances the advent of the Crusaders, who came as the rescuers of the East from the infidel, was regarded with very mixed feelings by the Christians on the spot. The Greeks hated the Latins at least as much as they feared the Turks. At times we find the emperor plotting with the sultan against his friends from the West. The conduct of the invading hosts intensified this antipathy.

The chronicles make it clear that this must have been the case even before there was any outbreak of hostility

between the two parties. Take, for instance, some of the occurrences in Syria and Palestine during the first Crusade. After achieving their stupendous task, a task worthy of a greater epic than Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*, in the successful siege of Antioch, the Crusaders proceeded to resume Christian worship in the city. In the churches they found icons with the eyes cut out, the noses scraped off, the whole smeared with filth. These they restored, putting the fabrics in good order. They settled salaries on the clergy and lavished on the churches gifts of gold and silver for crosses and chalices, and silk for vestments and altar cloths. They re-established the patriarch John with much honour and solemnity. They even set up bishops in cities that hitherto had not possessed them. So friendly was their attitude that when they left Antioch and were on their way to Jerusalem the Syrian Christians volunteered as guides. All this was very pleasant. But the schism!—what had become of the schism? That was in no way healed. Personal convenience on one side, and some sense of gratitude, not to say common decency, on the other, kept it in abeyance for the time being; but its re-emergence was inevitable, sooner or later. John of Antioch was in a very awkward position. He could not object to being restored to his rightful place, the patriarchal throne of Antioch; and he could not be otherwise than courteous to the deliverers from the West, through whose heroic valour and almost incredible toil this happy result had been brought about. Yet how could he fraternise with heretics—men who affirmed the double procession of the Holy Ghost, asserted the supremacy of the bishop of Rome, and worst of all, used unleavened bread at the communion? It was impossible. In this dilemma John chose the prudent if inglorious course of retreating. He went to Constantinople "of his good will," our chronicler is careful to say, "without any force or constraint."[1] The post being thus vacated, the Crusaders felt no scruple in appointing another patriarch; and accordingly they chose Bernard, whom they

[1] William of Tyre, c. 144.

had previously made bishop of Tarsus; he was a native of Valence who had come from the West as chaplain to the bishop of Puy. Of course he was a priest of the Latin Church and subject to the pope. It was the same with Dagobert whom the Crusaders had made patriarch of Jerusalem. He was their patriarch; he was no patriarch of the indigenous Christians.

The situation at Constantinople was infinitely worse. It was a Christian city in the hands of a Christian government when the Crusaders captured it. Therefore it had its patriarch at the time. This man was John Camaterus.[1] He fled to Didymotichum, but although he was no longer treated as the head of the Church, there was no disposition on the part of the Greeks to acknowledge the Latin usurper of his throne at St. Sophia. Two years later (A.D. 1205) Michael Antorianus was elected to the patriarchate by the Greeks of Nicæa with as much ceremony as if it had been at St. Sophia; and so the Greek Church went on in its independence notwithstanding the boasted union of East and West at Constantinople, for which Pope Innocent was grateful.

When we plant ourself in imagination among the Greeks, we see how ridiculous the very idea of a Latin Empire at Constantinople must have seemed to them. There never was any Latin Empire in the East. A huge band of brigands had seized the city; that was about all that had been done. Theoretically the barons divided out the territory of the Byzantine Empire. But they did not even know what that territory was, for in their distribution they included Assyria and Egypt and other parts of the Turkish dominions. Meanwhile they were actually only in possession of Constantinople and its immediate neighbourhood. Even here the "emperor" was little more than one of the barons who found it hard to maintain his authority over his turbulent fellow barons—like his contemporary King John in England. After reigning only one year the first "emperor" Baldwin was lost and probably killed among

[1] Le Quien, *Oriens Christianus*, vol. i. p. 276.

the Bulgarians. His brother Henry, who succeeded him and reigned for ten years, stayed the persecution of the Greeks and permitted them to practise their religious rites at Constantinople. Here was a gleam of hope for a settlement; but it vanished with the death of the liberal-minded "emperor." Peter, who followed, had only reigned for two years when he was lost among the mountains of Epirus, and nothing more was ever heard of him. Things went from bad to worse with the usurpation; a blight had seized it from the first; the doom of heaven was over it. The people fled from its hard taxation; fields were left untilled; trade died down; abject poverty was the fate of the city and its rulers. The barons tore the copper off the domes of the churches in order to coin money. They sold the most sacred relics, chief among which was the crown of thorns, which went to St. Louis of France. The last "emperor" even pawned his own brother to some Venetian nobles as a pledge for a loan. This pitiable pretender to the throne of the Cæsars spent most of his time in Europe, travelling from court to court and begging aid in money and men to defend his city.

Meanwhile the real empire was partially pulling itself together again. When the Crusaders took Constantinople they seized the head. The limbs then broke off and organised themselves as three separate governments at Trebizond, at Thessalonica, and at Nicæa. The latter was the chief centre, and by degrees it extended its power and territory, till at last most of the Byzantine Empire as this had existed when Constantinople fell had been gathered under its rule. At the same time the Greek Church in the provinces went on in its accustomed way as though there were no Latin Empire at Constantinople, no Latin patriarch, no union with the West, no submission to the papacy. These things were confined to the brigands who occupied the city; and those brigands, as we have seen, were being literally starved out.

Such was the condition of affairs when in the year 1261 some Greeks in the army of Michael Palæologus

crept through a hole in the walls of the once impregnable city and quietly recovered Constantinople for its own people. But disappointment followed. The hopes kindled at Nicæa were not realised. It was impossible really to restore the Byzantine Empire. The so-called Crusaders—of the fourth Crusade—had done little good to themselves, and infinite harm to the empire. The wonderful system of Roman administration was broken beyond possibility of repair. Thus these pretended defenders of Christendom against Islam prepared the way for the final overthrow of Christian government in the East. If Constantinople had not been captured by Latin Christians in the thirteenth century, probably it would not have been besieged and taken by Ottoman Turks in the sixteenth. At the door of these professed Crusaders lies the awful guilt of the ruin of the city and the opening of the road for the advent of a Turkish Empire in Europe and all its attendant miseries.

The newly restored Greek government under Michael at Constantinople found itself opposed by two enemies—the Latin power in the West, coldly sympathetic with the exiled Baldwin, but more effectually energetic in response to the demands of the popes, and the Turkish power, growing and spreading like a fungus till it reached the very gates of the city. Thus once again the Byzantine Empire shrank to the limits of the walls of Constantinople.

It is worthy of notice that the Church did not decay with the empire. We have often had occasion to contrast the subserviency of the Greek clergy with the independence of the papacy. But we have met with many exceptions, and these are all the more remarkable from the fact that the patriarch of Constantinople never had the position held by the pope at Rome. If he resisted the government it was at his peril, for he was only a subject living under the shadow of the imperial palace—not an independent prince, sometimes the most powerful personage in Europe, able to play one kingdom off against another, as was the case with the great Innocent III. and his able successors.

Michael Palæologus stained his succession to the throne

of Constantinople with an abominable crime. He was the tutor and guardian of John, the heir to the throne, a child only eight years old. It was expected that he would only act as regent, or at most as co-emperor. Instead of doing so, he seized the position of sole emperor, and blinded the boy to render him incapable of ever taking over the government.[1] Indignant at the crime, the patriarch Arsenius summoned a synod of bishops, in which he formally excommunicated the emperor. Attention has been called to the fact that he did not go further and depose the criminal. But here we may note an important difference between the Eastern and the Western Churches. Popes deposed princes, because popes claimed for the Church supreme authority over the secular government. That claim was never put forth by the Greek Church. In the East the theory was that each had power over its own province, though in practice the secular interfered with the spiritual. This spiritual power was now a serious reality. Therefore Michael was thoroughly alarmed. He begged for penance to be substituted for excommunication. Arsenius replied that even if he were threatened with death he would never remove the excommunication. The emperor paid the patriarch a visit and asked if he desired his abdication, but when, as he was unbuckling his sword, the patriarch held out his hand as though to receive it, Michael drew back and did not complete the action. He even spoke among his friends about appealing to the pope. Some years passed. Again the emperor applied to the patriarch for absolution; and again the stern servant of the God of righteousness refused. Then Michael could endure the strain no longer. He brought a number of charges against Arsenius—that he had shortened the matin prayer for the emperor, ordered the omission of the Trisagion, treated the sultan of the Seljukian Turks in a friendly way, etc., and on these grounds induced an assembly of bishops to depose him.[2] We have an account of the synod's proceedings recorded by the clerk of the court. Arsenius was exiled, and his succes-

[1] Pachymer, iii. 10; Gregory, iv. 4.

[2] Pachymer, iv. 6.

sor, Germanus, granted absolution to Michael, who however then persuaded him to retire, probably because he would not publish the fact. That was done by the next patriarch Joseph, a monk, who knew how to act the courtier. On the 2nd of February, A.D. 1267, there was a solemn function at St. Sophia, prepared for by a night spent in the church. The emperor cast himself on the ground before the patriarch, confessed his sin, and prayed for pardon. He remained prostrate while Joseph, in conjunction with the other bishops, read the absolution, after which he was admitted to the communion. Thus at last he had his wish. The whole story reveals surprising power in the Greek clergy, or rather, what is of more significance, a remarkable respect felt for religion and righteousness. It is not to be compared with Hildebrand's haughty conduct with the Emperor Henry; it is more like Ambrose's treatment of Theodosius at Milan, when he refused to admit the Roman emperor to the church with the stain of blood upon him. It was a moral protest, not an assertion of ecclesiastical arrogance.

During the whole period of the restored Byzantine Empire the chief matter of diplomacy with the emperors was their attempt to effect a union between the Eastern and Western Churches. This was purely a question of policy. There was no lofty quest for truth when dogma was under discussion, and no yearning of brotherly love when the attempt was to heal schism. The emperors, weak in arms and cramped for territory, desired in the first place to conciliate the popes; then by means of their influence to prevent the Western powers from instigating a new "Crusade" for the restoration of that floating shadow, "the Latin Empire of Constantinople"; and finally, to secure their aid in resisting the continual encroachments of the Turks. As early as A.D. 1262, the pope, Urban IV., had proclaimed a crusade against Michael as a usurper and a schismatic, and also against his friends the Genoese who had helped him. Urban had urged St. Louis to collect tithes for this object. Nothing had come of it, and a later pope, Gregory X., had replied to embassies from Michael

that no time was so favourable as the present for putting an end to the Greek schism. Pachymer, the historian, our chief authority for this period, had joined the Latin Church. No doubt courtiers were ready to follow.

The popes appear to have been entirely ignorant of the real condition of the Greek Church. Throughout these negotiations and all that followed there was not the slightest disposition on the part of that body to make any concession or to take any steps towards union. The Greeks had suffered too much from the cruel invasion and tyrannical domination of the Latins to have the least desire for ecclesiastical union with these people. The efforts towards union on the Byzantine side came wholly from the government, not at all from the people, the Church, or the clergy. Michael tried his utmost to persuade the patriarch and the bishops to join in his negotiations. But he failed completely. Is that surprising? At this very time the Greeks heard that the Western powers were fitting out an expedition to restore the Latin Empire. To them reunion with the Western Church seemed to imply the restoration of an odious foreign tyranny. Therefore, when delegates from the pope visited Constantinople and tried to reason with the Greek bishops and persuade them to accept the obnoxious *Filioque* clause, they met with nothing but stubborn resistance. The bishops replied that whatever the emperor's threats might be, they would not consent to any alteration in the ancient formula. The patriarch put forward Veccus, a learned, eloquent man, to represent the Greek cause. After describing various kinds of people who might be regarded as heretics, Veccus came to the conclusion that the Latins were among those "who are not called, but who are heretics."

Still Michael laboured for union. In the year 1274 he induced some of the bishops to join him in sending delegates to Lyons with this end in view. Gregory X. accepted their visit as a sign that they admitted the Roman form of the creed and submitted to his supremacy. After the professions of the emperor and the bishops had been read by their envoys, a *Te Deum* was sung, and the

union of the churches proclaimed. The patriarch Joseph declining to submit, he was promptly deposed, and his orator Veccus, who had gone over to the emperor's side, set in his place. Michael had his reward. The pope refused Charles of Angou permission to attack him. But when Martin IV. was pope he had sources of information or a keenness of perception that had been denied to Gregory. He was not to be hoodwinked by Michael's compliant professions, made with the sole object of securing his throne and empire, but not representing the thought and will of his Church. In the year 1281 Martin put an end to all negotiations for the time being by excommunicating Michael and the Greeks as schismatics. The next year the emperor died, and his son and successor, Andronicus II., who reigned for forty-six years (A.D. 1282–1328), returned to the anti-papal policy. Veccus was forced to retire to a monastery and Joseph was restored to the patriarchate. Still being in danger both from the West, no longer restrained by the papacy, and also from the Turks, Andronicus accepted the aid of Spanish mercenaries, the "Catalans," whose advent was the beginning of grievous trouble. Taking an independent course, these Spaniards were the first to introduce the Turks into Europe by inviting them to an alliance against an opposing faction at Constantinople.

The chief ecclesiastical event of this long reign is the curious episode of the patriarch Athanasius and his anathemas. Next to the emperor, the patriarch was the most important personage in Constantinople. It was therefore a serious matter to have Athanasius revealing himself as a stern, implacable ecclesiastic, scattering anathemas right and left. He became so unpopular that he was deposed and sent to a convent. A few years later, some lads, climbing a ladder to the top of a pillar in the dome of St. Sophia in search of a pigeon's nest, found there an earthen pot containing anathemas of Athanasius against the emperor and the rest of his enemies. The sequel of this curious incident sheds some light on the religious ideas of the times. Andronicus was terrified, and he sum-

moned a synod of bishops to consider his future prospects. The synod pronounced that only the man who had written the curse could withdraw it. So the emperor went on foot, accompanied by the bishops, to the cell of Athanasius, who was persuaded to absolve the imperial offender and resume his own position as patriarch.

Being in desperate straits, the next emperor, Andronicus III. (A.D. 1328–1341), reopened negotiations with the papacy, and sent a message to Pope John XXII. conveying his desire for union by the hands of some Dominican missionaries who were returning from Tartary. The pope replied by remitting preachers to Constantinople and by promising to do all he could to further the emperor's pious wish. On the death of Andronicus soon afterwards, the dangerous heritage of the throne of Constantinople fell to his son, John Palæologus, a child nine years of age, whose mother, Anne of Savoy, consented to the appointment of Cantacuzenus as regent; the next year (A.D. 1342) he was proclaimed joint-emperor. Cantacuzenus was a theologically-minded emperor, who composed several controversial works of no weight or significance. He retired in the year 1355, and the junior emperor John held the reins of government for the following thirty-six years. This emperor signalised the individuality of his policy by reopening negotiations with the papacy, but they came to nothing.

The last and most important of all the serious attempts to reconcile the two churches occurred in the reign of John V. (sometimes reckoned John VII.), who reigned during the years 1425–1448. He found his shrunken dominion in a desperate condition. The Turks, who were now established at Adrianople and other places in Europe, and who had actually besieged Constantinople three years before, though ineffectually, were continually threatening the very existence of the empire. In the year 1429, following the precedent set by Michael Palæologus, John sent to Pope Eugenius to reopen negotiations for union and asking to receive an envoy at Constantinople to arrange matters between the two parties. Two years later the council

of Bâle met. Eugenius ordered the council to go to Bologna for the convenience of the Greeks who were to attend it. This the majority refused to do, denying the right of a pope to remove an œcumenical council, and alleging that the Bohemians, the followers of John Huss, had already been summoned to Bâle. No doubt on their own account they were unwilling to cross the Alps and bring themselves into the power of the pope. Eugenius denounced this council as a "synagogue of Satan," and then summoned his own council at Ferrara; it was subsequently removed to Florence on account of the plague.[1] In November 1437 the emperor set out with a large following. Joseph, the aged patriarch of Constantinople, though without entertaining any hope for a successful issue, was forced to accompany the party. One of the most important members of it was the famous preacher Sylvester Syropulus, who has left a valuable account of the expedition.[2] Eugenius received them courteously and did his utmost to smooth the way to union. Both the pope and the emperor appear to have been actuated by a true desire to put an end to the schism.

The visitors were struck with the splendour of Venice; but when they were shown the treasures of St. Mark's, they thought, as Syropulus says, "These were once our own. They are the plunder of the Hagia Sophia and our holy monasteries." When the council was opened, after much delay, which the Greeks felt to be very irksome, six theologians on each side were appointed to formulate the points for discussion. It was not till they had removed to Florence, however, much against the wish of the Greeks at being dragged so far across Italy, that the serious debates began.

There were two points to be considered with regard to the *Filioque* clause—(1) the question of the truth or error of it; (2) the right of the Latins to add it to their creed.

[1] Following Belarmine and other Roman Catholic writers, Hefele reckons this to be an œcumenical council, *Hist. Counc.* vol. v., Appendix, p. 413.

[2] *Vera historia unionis non vera inter Græcos et Latinos.*

With respect to the first point, the Greeks had several private conferences among themselves, by means of which they came to the conclusion that the Latins did not mean that the procession of the Holy Ghost was from "two principles," and on that understanding they decided that the language of the clause was not in conflict with the Greek doctrine that the procession is *from* the Father and *through* the Son. That is to say, they did not change their own position at all; they simply admitted that the Latin position was not inconsistent with it. To this statement the council agreed. Surely that was a most remarkable concession on the part of the papal party, and thus far the victory must be accorded to the Greeks. If ideas rather than words are the essentials, the Eastern bishops did not give up anything. On the other hand, the Western bishops tacitly admitted that their test phrase was susceptible of an interpretation harmonious with the Greek doctrine. What then had become of the Greek heresy, so often denounced by the popes? It was allowed by a papal council to be no heresy.

The second point was more difficult. The emperor was led to admit that the clause was in the creed of the seventh œcumenical council, the second council of Nicæa (A.D. 787); but the bishops knew better. Angry debates followed. At length, John, by the exertion of all his influence, brought his party round to allow that the phrase *Filioque* had been inserted into the creed lawfully and for a good reason. If the decision of the first point had been favourable to the Greeks, the pendulum had now swung in the opposite direction, and on the whole it must be admitted that the Latins had the advantage. It does not appear that the other matter of serious dispute—the question of papal supremacy—was ever discussed by the council, at all events, publicly. We may recognise the wisdom of Eugenius in the evasion of it, and also his sincere desire for peace and union. Here, and indeed all along, we see in these discussions the peculiar danger of the reconciler. He glides over the thin ice; but the deep

waters lie beneath, and it will not be long before the ice breaks. There can be no solid union without a frank admission of differences. That was not seen at the time. It rarely is seen by amicable peace-makers. In July 1439, after twenty-six sessions of the council, the act of union of the Eastern and Western Churches was signed. In August it was published in the Duomo at Florence, and the *Te Deum* was sung in Greek.

It was not long before the futility of all these proceedings became apparent. The old patriarch had died just before the signing, and he was buried in the baptistery at Florence; so he had escaped from the dilemma. But the emperor's own brother, Demetrius, refused to sign the act of union. Neither Mark of Ephesus nor any of the bishops from Georgia would be present at the grand proclamation service. When at Venice, on his way home, the bishop of Heraclia was required to recite the creed in St. Mark's, he did so in the Greek form—without the *Filioque* clause. On returning to the East, John saw to his chagrin that all his efforts had been spent in vain. Mark of Ephesus led the opposition to union. The patriarchs of Antioch and Alexandria refused to sign it. The union was never really effected, and from this time the schism went on without any hope of healing.

The failure of the last important attempt to unite the Churches was inevitably followed by coolness on the part of the Western peoples towards the Greeks and indifference to their fate. This fact should be duly weighed when we are inclined to charge Europe with supine stupidity and heartless selfishness in permitting Constantinople to fall into the hands of the Turks. For generations that great city had been the bulwark of Europe, the one outstanding barrier against the rising tide of Asiatic barbarism, the only safeguard of civilisation against savagery, of Christianity against Islam. In the inception of the Crusades this had been perceived by the wiser men of the West. To their credit let it be said, the popes had seen it all along, and had consistently shaped their policy accordingly.

Now the failure of the council of Florence finally broke the bonds of sympathy between the East and the West just when they seemed to be growing into some real strength. Constantinople was left to itself; the consequence was its doom.

When the war-cloud was threatening, although all hope of real reunion was now over, John's brother, Constantine, who had succeeded him, effected a nominal union. A united communion was held at St. Sophia on December 12, 1452, and the names of the Eastern and Western patriarchs were both mentioned in the prayers. But the people looked on with amazement and horror at the consecration of an unleavened wafer by the officiating Latin priest. Rushing out in wild excitement to the cell of Gennadius—who had been one of the promoters of union at Florence, but who now denounced it—they cried, "What occasion have we for succour, or union, or Latins? Far from us be the worship of the Azymites." The first minister of the empire was heard to declare that he would rather see in Constantinople Mohammed's turban than the pope's tiara or a cardinal's hat.

Under these circumstances the really surprising thing is that the city had held out so long. She had never recovered from the fatal blow that she had received in the conquest and ravages of the Latins. Her final struggle is a miracle of patriotic heroism. The end would have come much sooner than was the case if it had not been for a vast unforeseen movement arising in another part of the world. Timour, with his Tartar host, poured over the Turkish Empire, threatening to sweep it entirely away. Then, while engaged in a life and death struggle, the Turks were compelled to relinquish their encroachments on the Greeks and concentrate their attention on their own affairs. When the danger had passed they returned to their age-long policy of absorbing the civilisation of Eastern Europe. These Turks were of the Ottoman stock, directly connected with an earlier conqueror, Genghis Khan, who had devastated Western Asia, and therefore they

must be distinguished from the Seljukian Turks whom the Crusaders had found in possession of Asia Minor and Syria. Their leader at the final scene was Mohammed II., a man possessing a singular combination of qualities, showing at one time the student's thirst for learning and at another the most heartless cruelty.

The scene of the siege and fall of Constantinople in the year 1453 is brought vividly before us in Gibbon's famous description,[1] one of the most brilliant passages in English literature. But the journal of the besieged resident, Nicolo Barbaro, which was not known to Gibbon, has enabled Mr. Pears to supplement the great historian with many striking details. The vital character of the interests at stake and the wide range of the issues involved give a tragic grandeur to this event only comparable with the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus.

The hero of the siege is Constantine Palæologus, the last Roman emperor, a man worthy to sit on the throne of the greatest of his predecessors. By the aid of the General Justiniani, a Genoese noble, Constantine was able to organise a good defence, and he maintained it with almost incredible energy and courage.

When it became clear that there was no hope of deliverance, and that the end was approaching, there was no panic. A spirit of religious fervour took possession of the citizens. They formed a solemn procession in which orthodox Greeks and Catholics of the Roman communion united. All who were not fighting on the walls joined in the *Kyrie Eleison*, as they marched through the streets, and a great cry of a people in its agony went up to heaven. Icons and relics were fetched from the churches and conveyed to the places where the defences were weakest, in the pathetic hope that where natural means failed supernatural power might intervene. Constantine preached "the funeral oration of the empire"—to use Gibbon's phrase. At length the surging host of invaders broke through a weak place and poured into the city. Then, at

[1] *Decline and Fall*, chap. lxviii.

the most critical moment, Justiniani the general was wounded. Soon after this final misfortune, seeing that all was lost, and refusing to survive his empire, Constantine dashed into the thick of the fight and perished amid the multitude of the slain.

Mohammed now gave the city up to plunder; but he ordered the buildings to be spared, reserving them for himself. St. Sophia was found to be crowded with fugitives, who had shut themselves up in their beloved cathedral, vainly expecting a miracle of deliverence to spring from its sanctity. They were caught in a trap. The barred door soon yielded to the battle-axes of the Turks. The old people were killed on the spot; the young men and women were led off in strings of captives for a worse fate. The Latins had wantonly hacked to pieces many a work of art; now the Turks destroyed much that they had left. It is a significant fact, however, that, as Critobulus tells us, many books were sold at low prices.[1] This suggests the hope that scattered treasures from the Constantinople libraries may yet be found in out of the way parts of the Turkish Empire.[2]

St. Sophia was now converted into a mosque. Mohammed called for an imaum, who ascended the pulpit and there recited the Mohammedan Creed. Still he did not desire the city to be deserted by the Greeks, and he invited them back, sanctioned their worship, and ordered them to elect a patriarch. Accordingly, a local synod was held, and George Scholarius—also known as Gennadius—was appointed to the unenviable post. The sultan received him at his seraglio and presented him with a pastoral cross of silver and gold, saying, "Be patriarch and be at peace. Count upon our friendship as long as thou desirest it, and thou shalt enjoy all the privileges of thy predecessors."

[1] Critobulus, xlii.

[2] It would be well if consuls, traders, missionaries, and travellers in Turkey would bear this in mind. They may yet discover Papias's "Exposition of the Oracles of the God," "The Gospel according to the Hebrews," or even Matthew's *Logia*.

This investiture of the patriarch by the sultan is a sign that the destruction of the empire was not the destruction of the Church. That calamity to the State might even have been the salvation of the Church. During the first three centuries persecution had proved a wholesome discipline preserving the vigour of primitive Christianity. With Constantine the Great's patronage of the Church, worldliness invaded the whole body and degeneration followed. Now the fatal alliance was severed, and once again the Church was set apart from the State and made liable to persecution. But she could not recover her pristine vigour; she felt the east wind of adversity to be blighting, rather than bracing.

One of the most serious evils occasioned by the fall of Constantinople was the heavy blow that this disaster gave to Oriental learning. Many of the Greek scholars fled to Europe and there assisted the Renaissance. But contemporary with the revival of learning in the West was its decay in the East. The priesthood sank into insignificance and lost influence for lack of culture; preaching disappeared; the Church became intellectually stagnant. Still, there were not wanting proofs of fidelity to conscience. It has been said that the Church that can produce no martyrs is doomed. There have been martyrs in the Greek Church under Turkish dominance all down the centuries. Treated as *rayahs*, as mere cattle, with no civil rights, the Christians have always suffered from disabilities and the infliction of unchecked wrongs. Yet they have remained true to their faith; and thus their conduct has testified continuously to a fidelity for which their brethren in the West, who have not had to endure their age-long trials, have been too slow to give them credit.

CHAPTER IX

LIFE AND LETTERS IN THE BYZANTINE CHURCH

(*a*) Greek historians named in earlier chapters.

(*b*) Neale, *Eastern Church*, Introd., and *Hymns of the Eastern Church*, 1876; Pitra, *Hymnographie de l'Église Gréque*, 1867; Brownlie, *Hymns of the Holy Eastern Church*, 1902; Curzon, *Monasteries of the Levant*, new edit., 1897; Lecky, *History of European Morals*, vol. ii., 1868; Krumbacher, *Geschichte der Byzantinischen Litteratur von Justinian bis zum Ende des Oströmischen Reiches*, 1897.

THE organisation of the Greek Church which was completed during the patristic period has never since undergone vital modifications in any of the three branches of its constitution—its dogma, its ritual, its government—excepting in so far as the last has been affected by political influences. The Monophysite and Monothelete controversies about the nature and will of Christ were the last serious discussions on the creed. Henceforth it became the duty of scholars and logicians to defend the settled dogmas of the Church, which was deemed to be holy chiefly because orthodox. The Western Church still felt free to develop truth, and it was the clash of new ideas with conservative loyalty to settled doctrine that produced the final and irrevocable breach with Rome. Henceforth the Greek theologians were to be apologists, but not primarily in the region of Christian evidences; they were more concerned with the polemics of heresy within the Church than with the war with unbelief outside her borders. Nevertheless, the insistent presence of Islam also demanded a defence of

the faith against the unbeliever, and called for apologetic literature of a more general character.

Faint echoes of old controversies agitated the Church from time to time. In the reign of Manuel Comnenus there was a scholastic discussion as to whether Christ presented His sacrifice for the sins of the world only to the First and Third Persons of the Trinity, or also to the Second, the *Logos*. A synod at Constantinople in the year 1156 decided for the latter contention, and therefore decreed that Christ offered His sacrifice in part to Himself. Ten years later a question of the two natures was revived on the words of Christ, "My Father is greater than I." To which nature did they refer—the Divine or the human? Heated discussions followed, and much excitement was roused among all classes of society. The Emperor Manuel favoured the view that the phrase applied to the God-man, to the whole incarnate personality, and this view was confirmed by a synod held in the year 1166. It is mournful to note that even with regard to so obscure a question as this no freedom of thought was permitted. Those who refused to accept the decree of the synod were banished and their goods confiscated. But these discussions, though very exciting at the time, left no permanent effects on the established orthodoxy, and therefore they cannot be regarded as landmarks of any importance in the history of doctrine.

Since the Greek Church has not changed materially in its doctrine or ritual through all the intervening centuries down to our own day, it may be as well to state here once for all the principal points of interest concerning the latter subject—namely, the ritual. The doctrine has been illustrated in the previous pages.

The seven sacraments are accepted by the Eastern as well as by the Western Church. Baptism continues to be observed in the form of immersion. It is administered to infants, and at the same time they are anointed on the eyes, mouth, nose, ears, and breast. Confirmation, which follows immediately, can be administered by presbyters—

a difference from the Western canonical arrangement, which confines this rite to the bishop. Penance is enacted, but it never developed in the East to the elaborate proportions and with the mechanical devices which gave rise to the sale of indulgences in the West. The priest tells the penitent that he is a sinner himself, he cannot forgive; only God forgives. Nevertheless he pronounces absolution. The Eucharist is treated equally in both churches as the most sacred office of religion. Ordination can only be conferred by a bishop, and throughout the hierarchy the inferior is ordained by his superior. Marriage is a sacrament carefully guarded by the Church. The higher clergy may not marry after ordination. Bishops may not have wives at all, and therefore the episcopate is mainly supplied by monks. Presbyters are married before ordination and retain their wives for life; but if one becomes a widower he may not take a second wife. Second marriages among the laity are permitted, or rather condoned, but not favoured. Third marriages are forbidden and treated as sinful. Unction is practised not so much as the *viaticum*, known as "extreme unction," but for the benefit of the sick who may be restored.

The government of the Church is maintained without material alteration in a settled hierarchical form. But the pre-eminence of the patriarch of Constantinople becomes more pronounced in his own provinces, and less effectual elsewhere. This twofold development was wholly due to political causes. The weakening of the Byzantine government gave greater scope and wider range to the authority of the Church. Next to the accession of a new emperor the most important event in Constantinople was the election of the patriarch. We now find patriarchs rebuking and even defying the throne with a force and a freedom hitherto unknown in the East, and more like the spirit of the great ecclesiastics of Rome. On the other hand, the absorption of Syria and Egypt into the realm of the caliphs and sultans made the patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem prisoners in their own cities, and cut them off to

a great extent from intercourse with Constantinople. This enforced isolation of the three Eastern patriarchs became an important factor in the final severance of the Churches.

The conduct of worship in the Byzantine Church was also continued without serious alteration during this period, the ritual becoming more and more stereotyped. This was centred in the communion office, which, known as the "mass" in the West, is named in the East the "liturgy."[1] At first every bishop was free to adopt his own forms of prayer, though the liturgy of St. James was largely accepted as the common basis. In its present form this cannot be older than the end of the fourth century, but no doubt it is a development from more ancient times. It was primarily intended for use in the Church at Jerusalem. Next came the liturgy of St. Basil, which is founded on the liturgy of St. James, but is much longer and more elaborate; and after that the liturgy of St. Chrysostom, which is not so long. These two together constitute the Byzantine liturgies, the lengthy liturgy of St. Basil being used only on certain occasions.[2] Originating in Asia Minor this became the basis of the Armenian liturgy. The liturgy of St. Chrysostom was primarily the form of worship adopted in Constantinople, and it became the normal service for the Byzantine Church on all Sundays except the few to which the liturgy of St. Basil was assigned.

The service books of the Greek Church are in fourteen quarto volumes. They consist of three parts—hymns, poetry, portions of Scripture. No separate Bibles are published for the use of the people, although the action of the British and Foreign Bible Society in circulating the Scriptures is not hindered by the Greek Church officials as it is by the Roman Catholic hierarchy, and in some cases it is welcomed gratefully and encouraged. This Church provides manuals, *vade mecums* for services, especially for the burial service. It looks askance at the Russian Church

[1] Λειτουργία.

[2] Lent (except Palm Sunday), the eve of Epiphany, Easter, and Christmas, and the feast of St. Basil.

for its alterations of the old service books and other innovations.

In the Greek Church the communion service is more lengthy, elaborate, and dramatic than the Roman mass. There are prayers and lessons, but every function of the service is accompanied by some action. While the Western ceremonial appeals to the soul mainly through the ear, the Eastern seeks to awaken the interest and chain the attention more by its appeal to the eye in richly varied symbolical acts performed by the priests and deacons. The congregation watches the stir and movement of an elaborate moving function. Now the candles are lighted; now they are extinguished; doors are opened, closed again; the clergy kiss the altar, kiss the gospel, cross the forehead, mouth, and breast; there is the swinging of the censer; the liturgical vestments are frequently changed so that the worshipping spectator may have passing before his gaze a kaleidoscopic variation of colour—each tint having its special symbolism; processions, genuflections, prostrations, all have their part in the great ceremonial. Much of this is to be witnessed in a Roman high mass, but not with the volume and variety of symbolism seen in the performance of the Greek liturgy. The pomp and ceremony of the Church is parallel to the pomp and ceremony of the court described with so much unction by the literary Emperor Constantine Pogonatus. It agrees with the stiff embroidered and jewelled vestments, the enamelled icons, the gold and mosaic decorations of the basilicas in which it is the scenic drama of worship. There is no attempt in all this to rouse enthusiasm; that can be done by the sermon which precedes and prepares for it, when the excitable congregation clap and shout and wave their handkerchiefs at the eloquent periods of some popular preacher.[1] In the liturgy, on the other hand, all is decorum. The people join in the responses; they wail the *Kyrie Eleison*; they make the dome ring again with the mighty chant of the

[1] This was the ancient custom. To-day preaching is rarely heard in the Greek Church.

Trisagion; but it is all ordered and disciplined, and the desired result is awe and faith, rather than energy and action.

Nevertheless, while so much was done to make the central facts of Christianity as embodied in the life-story of Christ vivid and impressive by means of elaborate appeals to the sensuous imagination, it was not here that people found satisfaction for their strongest religious appetites. Through much of our period preaching was still prominent. Bible reading has always been encouraged in the Greek Church. People could go to the churches and read the Bibles there for themselves. Unlike the modern Roman service in an unknown tongue, the Greek service was conducted in Greek, the language of the people. All the ancient services were carried on in the languages spoken by the congregations engaged in them. In spite of this fact the intellectual element was not the most prominent, nor did the ideas so skilfully interwoven into the rich symbolism of the liturgy really grip the people who watched the ceremonial and took part in the reponses. This is proved by what we have seen in the historic controversies of the Byzantine age. Relics were deemed more important than ritual, icons than liturgy. To treasure a saint's bone or kiss a picture of Christ—this was what most concerned the Greek Christian of the Byzantine period in the matter of religion. The best teachers of the Church deprecated the fetishism of relic worship; but they were powerless to stem the tide of superstition that swept over East and West alike.

After this the stoutest Protestant may regard the invocation of the Virgin and saints, and even the worship offered to them, as intelligent in comparison with such childish superstition. A new mythology sprang up, and legends of the saints took the place of pagan myths. Thus the martyr Phocas, a gardener at Sinope in Pontus, superseded Castor and Pollux as the sailors' guardian. On board ship he had his portion set for him at table and then sold, the proceeds being given to the poor as a thank-offering for a prosperous voyage.

Learning and literature flourished during the Byzantine period, though not so as greatly to enrich the libraries of bibliophiles in later ages. Like the Benedictine monasteries in the West, the Basilian monasteries of the Greek Church guarded and transmitted the writings of the great Church teachers, the monks diligently copying manuscripts and laboriously constructing *catenæ* of the opinions of the Fathers. But while their reading was wide, it was not deep; they were scholarly, but uncritical. They lacked imagination, invention, constructiveness. It is a striking fact that the stream of ecclesiastical history which flowed so copiously through the previous centuries now began to run dry, or rather perhaps we should say, was now diverted into the main river of political and secular history. This is the age of the voluminous Byzantine historians. Anybody who attempts to wade through their pages must soon be wearied with their unhappy attempts at cumulative rhetoric. The style reminds us of popular Victorian prose at its worst. There is a constantly recurring effort at producing effects by piling up clauses one upon another till a sentence is sometimes expanded to the extent of a page of print. Theophanes is about the last of the writers who retain some traces of the literary spirit of Thucydides. He gives weight to his narrative by his own contributions of political wisdom. But, for the most part, these narratives are choked with colourless details—details which neither characterise nor vitalise the narrative. They are barren of serious reflection, in place of which we have pages of flat narrative varied by bursts of adulation or vituperation.

After allowing for undeniable defects, we must perceive that these were not dark ages, nor were they inert or infructuous according to their kind. After John of Damascus, the last of the Fathers, the next great writer and the last of his own calibre is Photius,[1] who died in the year 891. His chief work is the *Bibliotheca*,[2] an encyclopædia of literature, containing accounts of nearly three

[1] See pages 235, ff.

[2] Μυριοβίβλιον.

hundred Christian and pagan works together with "elegant extracts"; unfortunately a great part of this book has been lost. His *Nomocanon* is the basis of Greek canon law, the first systematical arrangement of which known to us was drawn up by Johannes Scholasticus (John the Lawyer), a presbyter at Antioch, who afterwards became patriarch of Constantinople (A.D. 565).[1] About the year 1180, Photius's *Nomocanon* was commented on by Theodore Balsamon, a deacon of Constantinople, as the standard collection of canon law for the Eastern Church. Photius was a voluminous writer, narrow in view, bitter in tone. His works include controversial treatises against the Latins and against the Paulicians, and among other books the *Amphilochia*,[2] containing answers to more than three hundred questions put to him by Amphilochius of Cyzicus. With Photius we come to the end of the great Greek Church writers whose names are known to fame. But the period of the Comnenian dynasty was the Augustan age of the Byzantine Empire—in some respects comparable to our age of Queen Anne rather than to our glorious Elizabethan period. Then we have that fierce opponent and libeller of the Paulicians, Michael Psellus, a man of wide culture, and a writer on a variety of subjects, who earned a reputation as a teacher of philosophy.[3] He died in the year 1105, leaving, among other books, a work on demonology[4] which contains an invaluable store of information with respect to mediæval notions on a subject then deemed of vital importance, and a compendium of universal science

[1] This work by John the Lawyer was based on still earlier collections. It reduced the sixty heads of canon law in the older writers to fifty, and added to the canons of Nicæa, Ancyra, Neo-Cæsarea, Gangra, Antioch, Ephesus, and Constantinople, already collected and received in the Greek Church, the "Apostolical canons," the canons of Sardica, and those contained in the canonical letter of Basil. When at Constantinople John edited an abridgment of his earlier work with the addition of a comparison of the imperial rescripts and civil laws (especially the Novels of Justinian) under the title *Nomocanon*. See Smith's *Dictionary of Chr. Biog.* vol. iii. p. 366, col. 2.

[2] Ἀμφιλόχια.

[3] He was called φιλοσόφων ὕπατος.

[4] περὶ ἐνεργειάς δαιμόνων.

based on theology,[1] useful as a cyclopædia of the knowledge of his age. Theophylact, the archbishop of Achrida in Bulgaria, was a contemporary of Psellus, who composed a commentary in the form of a *catena*. Euthymius Zigabenus, a monk at Constantinople, wrote a reply to the heretics at the command of the Emperor Alexius Comnenus, a mere compilation, though famous in its day. Eustathius, the archbishop of Thessalonica, was a commentator on Homer and Pindar, but also a Christian theologian and a reformer of monasticism. Michael Acominatus, a respected statesman at Constantinople, produced a defence of orthodoxy in opposition to the heretics, which is deemed an abler and more independent work than Euthymius's official book written to order. Nicolas of Methone in Messenia composed a reply to the Neo-Platonist Proclus, in which he anticipated Anselm's doctrine of redemption. All these writers belong to the same prolific period of late Greek literature. The emperor's own daughter Anna has already been mentioned. She takes her place among the Byzantine historians.

Coming to the next period, which follows the disorders and miseries of the Latin usurpation, we have two centuries of less brilliant, but still more or less continuous literary activity under the Palæologi (A.D. 1250–1453), chiefly occupied with the question of reunion with Western Christendom. It is refreshing to discover in the midst of this controversy a man who would direct our attention away from arid theological and ecclesiastical polemics to the eternal verities. This is Nicolas Cabasilas, archbishop of Thessalonica, a mystic, who defended his brother mystics at Mount Athos when they were charged with heresy, and that with a depth of spirituality which throws a favourable light on what, when seen among the monks, has been regarded as an ignorant superstition. The very title of this book is like a gleam of light from heaven in a world of very secular ecclesiasticism, for that title is *Concerning the Life in Christ*.[2] The mystics are of no age

[1] Διδασκαλιὰ παντοδαπή.

[2] περὶ τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ ζωῆς.

or of all the ages. They stand apart from the logical development of doctrine and pursue a method of their own, which is always essentially the same. Cabasilas was a contemporary of John Tauler, for he died in 1354, while Tauler died but seven years later (in 1361). These two, the former in Greece, the latter in Germany, apparently having no connection one with the other, agree in their vital principles and join hands with the pseudo-Dionysius in the patristic period and with William Law in modern times. Like our Western mystics who were forerunners of the Reformation, but more openly and actively so, Nicolas Cabasilas was an opposing influence against the deadening formalism of the Greek Church. He wrote a mystical exposition of the liturgy to bring out its spiritual meaning. Other writers of this later period are Demetrius Cydonius, a contemporary of Cabasilas, who wrote on "Contempt of Death"—Simeon of Thessalonica, who comes about fifty years later, and whose book on *The Faith, The Rites, and the Mysteries of the Church* is a valuable storehouse of ecclesiastical archæology—Marcus Eugenicus of Ephesus, the ablest opponent of the reunion which was supposed to have been effected at Florence, who also wrote a defence of the doctrine of eternal punishment in answer to John VII., Palæologus, who had objected to it as inconsistent with God's justice and man's frailty—Gennadius, afterwards known as George Scholarius, whom we have already met,[1] forced to be a supporter of the union when at Florence, but afterwards its most energetic opponent. More popular by far than any of these works was the romance of *Barlaam and Josaphat*, a book which was to the Middle Ages what the *Shepherd of Hermas* had been to the early Church at Rome, and what Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* has become to modern readers. It was their favourite religious book, because concrete and dramatic. In fact it was the one religious novel of the time. In the Latin version of it, this book was even more widely read in the West than in its earlier Eastern home. It is found

[1] See page 269.

complete or in part in an immense number of manuscripts. An uncritical age attributed it to John of Damascus, among whose works it appears; but this tradition cannot be maintained. The book was long read as veritable history, and accordingly the Roman Martyrology honours its two heroes as saints and assigns the 27th of November as their day. But its remarkable resemblance to the legendary life of Buddha in the *Lalita Vistara* led to its being traced back to that Indian source by Dr. Liebrecht.[1] Josaphat is the son of the king of "the land of the Æthiopians called India," who is kept by his father in the royal park and palace in close seclusion so that he may see nothing of the evil or misery of the world, and especially that he may not come into contact with Christianity and monasticism, which his father is endeavouring to repress. But he gets leave to ride abroad, and then sees a cripple and a blind man, with the result that he is greatly depressed and saddened. While he is in this state he receives a visit from Barlaam, a monk disguised as a merchant, who has been sent to India by a Divine vision. The result is Josaphat's conversion. When the king learns of this he is much distressed, and in order to distract his son's attention divides with him the government of his realm, but at length he too is led over to Christianity by his son's influence. Finally, Josaphat renounces his high position, goes on a journey in quest of his spiritual father Barlaam, whom after two years of weary wandering at length he finds living as a hermit in a cave. He stays with Barlaam for the rest of his life, and there the dead bodies of the saints are found long after untouched by decay in the odour of sanctity.

It remains for us to notice one other form of literature originated in this period, the Greek Christian poetry, consisting chiefly of hymns. Much of this has been made

[1] See Ebert's *Jahrbuch für röm. und engl. Literatur*, 1860, ii. pp. 314–334; cf. St. Hilaire, *Le Bouddha et sa Religion*, and Max Müller, on "Migration of Fables," *Contemporary Review*, vol. xiv. pp. 572–599.

familiar to English readers by the versions of Neale and others. We have traces of Christian hymns in the New Testament, and Pliny refers to the singing of them in the churches of Bithynia at the time of Trajan.[1] St. Basil refers to a hymn of the martyr Athenogenes, who died in the year 169, "Which as he was hurrying on to his perfecting by fire he left as a kind of farewell gift to his friends."[2] Hymns and psalms always had their place in Christian worship.[3] During the fourth century Church psalmody was much advanced, first in Syria by Ephraim, then at Constantinople by Chrysostom and others, later in the West, especially under the influence of Ambrose. There is a question whether the Greek hymns of the fourth century were metric; but though that may have been the case, there is no doubt that from the eighth century onward Greek hymns were simply rhythmic, not metric, and were used like the psalms for chanting. Three or more stanzas, called *troparia*,[4] constituted an *ode*, three odes a *triodeon*, and three triodia a *canon*. It was usual for each ode to end with a *doxa*, *i.e.* a doxology, and a *theotokion*,[5] which was a stanza in honour of Mary as the mother of God. These hymns occupy the greater part of the Greek service book. Most of them are rubbish;[6] but among them are gems of immortal value.

The great age of hymn-writers commences with the eighth century, and at its head stands John of Damascus, who was thought to be inspired by the Virgin Mary, the patron of his convent at Mar Saba. His canon for Easter Day, known as the "golden canon," sung at midnight on Easter Eve, begins with the words, "Christ is risen," to which the antiphonal shout is "Christ is risen indeed."

[1] *Epist.* 97.

[2] *De Spiritu Sancto*, xxix. 73. This has been identified with two early hymns, the Δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις (*Gloria in excelsis*), and the φῶς ἱλαρόν, still used in the Greek daily service.

[3] *e.g.* Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* v. 28.

[4] τροπάριον, a small τρόπος or mode.

[5] Θεοτοκίον.

[6] A "deluge of worthless compositions," Neale, *Hymns of the Eastern Church*, 3rd edit. p. 38.

Then we have John's foster-brother and fellow-monk, Cosmas of Jerusalem, "the Melodist," whom Neale regards as the most learned of the Greek poets. Stephen the Sabaite, a nephew of John of Damascus, who spent fifty-nine years in the convent of Mar Saba, is the author of the Greek composition on which Neale founded his well-known English hymn—

"Art thou weary, art thou languid?"

Another hymn-writer was Theophanes the historian, known as "the Branded," who was mutilated for his devotion to the icons and died about A.D. 820. Theodore of Studium and his brother Joseph come half a century later (about A.D. 890). Lastly, there is Theocristus, in the same monastery at Constantinople, the author of "a suppliant canon to Jesus," which Dr. Neale anglicises in the hymn[1]—

"Jesu, name all names above,
Jesu, best and dearest,
Jesu, Fount of perfect love,
Holiest, tenderest, nearest!
Jesu, source of grace completest,
Jesu truest, Jesu sweetest,
Jesu, well of power Divine,
Make me, keep me, seal me Thine," etc.

The Church which could produce such a hymn as that will be entirely misjudged if it is only viewed in the light of the quarrels of its bishops with heretics and schismatics. It was the end of the ninth century, too, that age which was the darkest of the Dark Ages in the West, when a monk in the great Constantinople monastery poured out his soul in one of the hymns of truest adoration and love for his Lord ever produced, anticipating similar hymns of personal devotion to Christ in the two Bernards at Clairvaux and Cluny. It is in its hymns that we can trace the course of a pure stream of genuine spiritual religion that is sometimes forced underground when we are

[1] The Greek begins, Ἰησοῦ γλυκύτατε, etc.

watching the external course of Church history—its angry debates, greedy ambitions, and bitter antipathies. These ugly phenomena make up too much of the history of the Church; they are scarcely at all indicative of the history of Christianity, the history of spiritual religion. For understanding this we are better helped by the stories of obscure lives and the breathing of simple souls. The hymn-writing continued through the tenth century and on into the middle of the eleventh, when it sank into silence. It was no time for song when the Turks were pouring over the larger part of Eastern Christendom, and the very existence of Church and empire were at stake; nor again when the West came to their relief in the dubious garb of Crusaders commissioned by the pope of Rome, with whom they would have nothing to do.

During all this time, both in the West and in the East, monasticism was cherished as the ideal of the religious life and the true monk was regarded as the typical saint. Two great monastic centres are now especially conspicuous. One of these is the monastery at Studium, made famous as the scene of the work of Theodore. Here a very active common life was maintained. We have seen how it was a centre of opposition to the iconoclastic movement. It was the home of a succession of writers of devout hymns of the Greek Church. It was also the place where the reproduction of literature in the form of beautifully written manuscripts was carried on with the greatest assiduity guided by the best taste, so that this monastery may be regarded as taking the place of a modern university press and school of technology in one of the finest and most characteristic arts of the Middle Ages.

The other great monastic establishment was the collection of convents and cells, the many laura, of Mount Athos. This mountain, rising to a peak of white marble 6,350 feet above the sea, is a conspicuous landmark visible from the plain of Troy and the slopes of Olympus. It gives its name to the peninsular in the Ægean Sea of which it is the southernmost point; but it is known in the

East as The Holy Mountain[1] on account of its collection of religious houses. Curzon counted 935 places of worship, including churches, chapels, and oratories, every large convent containing from six to twenty chapels, the walls of which are covered from top to bottom with frescoes.[2] The family of the Comneni (A.D. 1058–1204) bestowed special privileges on the monks of Mount Athos. Persecuted and pillaged under the Latin dominance, they appealed to Pope Innocent III. for protection and were favourably regarded by him. With the recovery of Constantinople by the Palæologi their prosperity returned. Several emperors retired here from the cares of the world. The shrines richly decorated with goldsmith work of a high order, the libraries with their fine illuminated manuscripts, the splendid frescoes, reckoned among the finest specimens of Byzantine art, and the natural advantages of its retreats among rocks and ravines and woody slopes, with glimpses out to the sunny sea, combined to render Mount Athos the choicest spot in Eastern Christendom. The monks were wise in making timely submission to the Turks, with the result that, though they had suffered from earlier Saracen raids and though they had been very cruelly treated by their fellow-Christians from the West, when Constantinople was taken by Mohammed and the rest of the Eastern Church came under the Turkish yoke, Mount Athos was allowed virtual independence subject to a tribute—a unique privilege which it has maintained down to the present day.

But it is neither its lovely situation, its size, its numerous population of monks, its many sacred buildings, its treasures of art and literature, nor its home rule that have given Mount Athos its high honour in the Greek Church. That is due to the renowned sanctity of its monks, and especially to one peculiar characteristic which may be deemed either a sign of the highest spirituality or a mark of the grossest, most ignorant superstition. Influenced by the mysticism of the pseudo-Dionysius, and

[1] Ἅγιον Ὄρος. [2] *Monasteries of the Levant*, p. 18.

following the example of Simeon, an abbot of a Constantinople monastery, the monk of Mount Athos practised the self-hypnotism of an Indian fakir. Sitting in a corner of his cell, pressing his chin firmly into his breast, fixing his eyes on his navel, and holding his breath as long as possible, till his vision became dim, the devotee passed through a condition of profound depression of spirit into an ecstasy in which he saw himself surrounded by a halo of light, the light of God that shone around Christ at the Transfiguration. A rapture of what he took to be unearthly joy seized him, and he felt himself brought into the very presence of God by his experience of the beatific vision. His cell, his monastery, his companion monks, the world, his own personality, vanished from his consciousness, and he sat enthralled, without thought, or wish, or movement, entirely occupied with his supernatural experience.

The quietness and passivity, the entire emptying of the mind of all thought, and the exclusion of all sensations, which were the condition of the trance, led those who indulged in it to be called "Hēsychasts."[1] Accordingly the controversy to which they gave rise has been designated the Hēsychast controversy. This was originated by Barlaam, who had been the ambassador of Andronicus III. to the pope at Avignon on the question of the reunion of the Churches. No sooner was this man back at Constantinople than he accused the monks of Mount Athos of the heresy of Ditheism—scornfully describing them as "navel souls."[2] Gregory Palamas, afterwards archbishop of Thessalonica, defended them. For doing so he was included in Barlaam's accusations. A council was held on the subject at Constantinople in the year 1341, when the unpopularity of Barlaam's negotiation for the union came to the aid of the Mount Athos monks. The council gave its sanction to the doctrine of the uncreated light, connecting it with a Divine energy,[3] which was to be distinguished from the essence[4] of God. The accuser would have been condemned

[1] ἡσυχάζοντες. [2] ὀμφαλόψυχοι. [3] ἐνέργεια. [4] οὐσία.

if he had not recanted, after which he withdrew to Italy and joined the Latin Church. But this did not end the controversy, which was taken up by Barlaam's admirer Gregory Acindynus and Nicephorus the historian. Two more synods were held on the subject—the last in A.D. 1351, and these both followed the example of the earlier synod and declared in favour of the monks. Thus the idea of the uncreated light was repeatedly pronounced to be orthodox by the Greek Church.

It is difficult for a Western, and especially an Anglo-Saxon Protestant, mind not to feel contempt and disgust for what appears to be a gross and degrading superstition. And yet when we remember the trances of the prophets —especially of Ezekiel—and take *note* of the *curious* phenomena brought to light by recent experimental psychology, we may be led to suspend our judgment and allow the possibility that to some, if not all, who went through the abnormal experience, it may have been the condition of realising genuine spiritual communion, by means of its complete mastery of the distractions that come from the world of sense. Therefore, although itself apparently so completely materialistic, after all it may not have been so very alien to that internal light preached by George Fox, which his followers regard as the secret and source of their deepest religious life.

When we turn from the monks to the main body of the Church, and ask, What was its religious and moral condition during these later centuries of the Byzantine era? we are faced with a tantalising question which it is always difficult to answer. For most historians confine their attention to large movements and prominent personages. Suetonius's gossip of court *scandal* at Rome under the Cæsars does not give us any idea of the habits of the farmers on the plains of Italy, nor does Juvenal's satire on the fashionable *society* of his day teach us anything about the behaviour of the respectable citizens of the country towns. Still less do the Byzantine chroniclers throw light on the conduct and character of the subjects

ruled by the Comneni and the Palæologi. Nevertheless, now and then we have hints of the existence of a public conscience reflecting the private morals of the people. Finlay repeatedly asserts his opinion that a high standard of morality was maintained in the Greek Empire at this time, and that morally as well as intellectually the Eastern Church was now much superior to the Western. We have seen that these were by no means dark ages in regard to culture, scholarship, and art. They were centuries of luxurious life and refinement, contrasting strongly with the ignorant barbarism of the barons who conducted the Crusades. The disapproval of second marriages and the grave condemnation of third marriages indicate some strictness in the public conscience which *a fortiori* would reprobate more serious offences in the relation of the sexes. But even Finlay admits the degradation of morals in the eleventh century under the unscrupulous Empress Zoe. The patriarch Alexius declined to celebrate the third marriage of this empress, although he had performed the ceremony when she married her second husband—a court servant well known to be her accepted lover—the very night of the death of her first husband. The third husband was the dissolute Constantine IX., who had had two wives. Yet the patriarch crowned the new emperor with the usual Church ceremonies the day after his marriage.

In reading the history of these centuries, we are horrified at the frequent cases of mutilation of their rivals and victims perpetrated by the emperors. Blinding was quite the rule when a dangerous person was so unfortunate as to fall into the hands of his enemy. A young prince would be suddenly torn away from all the splendour and luxury of the court, and flung into a dungeon, there to languish for decades. The operation of blinding was carried out with cold-blooded, scientific skill. It was deemed an act of humanity and refinement when, in place of the brutal act of gouging out the eyes, a copper globe was held in front of them reflecting and concentrating the sun's rays so as to ruin the sight without actually destroying the

organs themselves. This shows that the purpose of the cruel punishment was not mere torture or the savage revenge of mutilation for its own sake. "Perhaps we should say that the precise purpose of this common expedient of blinding was not so much to incapacitate the victim physically, as to render it improbable that people should wish to restore him to a position of power, that is to say, to incapacitate him in the eyes of the public."[1] It is true that the blind Dandolo was the leader of the Latin expedition against Constantinople; but he was a man of known ability and trusted integrity, loyal to Venice, with none of the self-seeking that actuated most of the barons.

[1] A suggestion made by Prof. Gwatkin in conversation with the present writer.

PART II

THE SEPARATE CHURCHES

THE idea of a catholicity so wide and generous, or, as some would prefer to regard it, a comprehensiveness so lax and latitudinarian, as to contain a number of churches differing in doctrine, discipline, and ritual, which many people cherish in the present day, was scarcely conceived before modern times; it was not contemplated by any of the ancient churches, each of which anathematised all Christians outside its pale. Justin Martyr's application of the Stoic doctrine of the *Logos spermaticos* to Christianity might have introduced an anticipation of such an idea, and the large liberalism of Clement of Alexandria might even have welcomed it, had it appeared above the horizon. But Cyprian's close catholicism was much more to the mind of the patristic Church, and the mediæval Church had no wider outlook.

In point of fact, however, there was a division of Christendom into separate churches quite early, and that division has never been healed. The causes of it were twofold—partly racial and political, and partly doctrinal and polemical. The spread of Christianity beyond the confines of the Roman Empire led to the establishment of churches in foreign kingdoms. At first these churches were regarded as integral parts of the one Catholic Church, and their bishops had a right to attend œcumenical councils. But several influences tended to cut them off. The mere fact of distance, difficulties of travel, and troubles in crossing the frontiers—especially in times of war—tended more and more to separate them. Then in their isolation they developed their several types of racial individuality, together

with a growing antipathy to the habits of churches of other races. The adoption of Christianity by Constantine, followed by the close alliance of Church and State, or rather dominance of the Church by the State, had as its natural consequence a tendency to limit the Church which deemed itself Catholic to the confines of the Roman Empire. By an inevitable reaction the patriotism of local churches in other countries would tend to develop their individuality. This process was hindered by persecution, which led foreign Christians ill-treated by their own government to look to the friendly Roman Empire for protection. Still, it could not be ultimately frustrated.

The second cause of separation—the doctrinal and polemical—was much more thorough and effectual. As early as the second century there had been heretical bodies, such as the Montanists and the Marcionites, existing as regularly organised churches; and a little later orthodox but schismatic communions, such as the Novatians and the Donatists, each regarding itself as the one true Church. The Christological controversies had more serious and permanent consequences, because here national and racial influences combined with the doctrinal to aggravate and perpetuate the severance. In this way Monophysites became Coptic and Syrian Churches, and Nestorians shaped into Churches of Persia, Chaldæa, and other Eastern parts. The Mohammedan conquests tended to confirm these divisions. They made communication between the Christians within their dominions and the Church of the empire difficult and precarious. But that was not all. Under the tolerant caliphs the territory of Islam became a harbour of refuge for Christians angrily denounced and driven from pillar to post by the holy orthodox Church of the empire. The scornful Arab made no difference between the various schools of "infidels" whom he tolerated. Thus churches excommunicated as heretical by the Greek and Roman authorities remained in safety out of the clutches of the tyrannical emperors and ecclesiastics, who would have harried them if they had had a chance to do so. Mean-

while, persecution, whether actual or only held over as a threat, became the most effectual barrier to reunion.

We have had abundant opportunities of observing how ecclesiastical, political, and doctrinal causes led to the total and final severance of the two great sections of the original Catholic Church. These we have seen in the clash of the rival claims of Rome and Constantinople; in the assumption of universal headship of the Church by the papacy, denied and repudiated in the East; in the crowning of Charles the Great by Leo III., and the consequent severance of the Latin Church from the remnant of the Roman Empire which was identified with the Eastern Church; and lastly, in bitterly contested doctrinal differences, especially that connected with the *Filioque* clause added by the Western theologians to the Nicene Creed, and the miserable quarrel over the question of the use of unleavened bread in the communion, which seemed to outweigh all other occasions of conflict in the minds of the people of Constantinople.

Thus we have reached the stage when it will be no longer possible to carry on one continuous story of Church history. It will now be necessary to trace the history of each of the separate churches. In order to do this effectually we must go back to their origins, in the cases where these origins have not been considered already, and study them along the lines of their own distinctive courses of development.

DIVISION I

EARLY CHRISTIANITY OUTSIDE THE EMPIRE

(*a*) Eusebius; Socrates; Sozomen; Theodoret; Philostorgius; Aphraates, *Homilies*; Auxentius; Jornandis, *Roma et Getica* (edited by Mommsen), 1882.

(*b*) Harnack, *Expansion of Christianity*, Book IV. chap. iii.; Neale, *Patriarchate of Antioch*, pp. 40, 74–78, 114–133, 146–150; Duchesne, *Les Missions Chrétiens au sud de l'empire Romain*, 1896; C. A. Scott, *Ulfilas, the Apostle of the Goths*, 1885; Bessell, *Ueber das Leben des Ulfilas*, etc., 1860.

BEFORE proceeding to sketch in brief outline the continuous story of the various Eastern Churches down the ages till our own day, it may be well to revert to the earliest period of the spread of Christianity in the outer world, and gather up the chief events in connection with the origin and growth of primitive churches beyond the confines of the Roman Empire. Much of this is shrouded in the mists of legend; but even that fact comes into history because the mere existence of the legends is significant, as an indication of the condition of the contemporary districts to which they refer. If we come upon the story of the conversion of any place, we may be sure that Christianity was well established there at least by the time when that story was afloat, however fantastic it may be in itself. While we cannot accept the alleged correspondence between Jesus Christ and King Abgar recorded by Eusebius,[1] or place any reliance on his account of the labours of Thomas and Thaddæus, the flourishing condition of Christianity in Edessa in the second century, when Tatian produced his Harmony for the use of

[1] *Hist. Eccl.* i. 13.

the Church in that Syrian metropolis, points to a very early extension of Christianity in the East. Barsedanes the Gnostic, whom Hippolytus called an "Armenian,"[1] came from this place, which became an important centre not only for Syrian Christianity, but for missionary activity and the spread of the gospel into Persia and Armenia The large province known as *Armenia Magna*—east of *Armenia Minor*—which had been included in the Roman Empire when at its greatest extent, was lost to the empire during our period; and therefore its Christian inhabitants were more or less cut off from their brethren in the main body of the Church, while they were subjects of Parthian, Persian, or Saracen rulers. This territory had been recognised as a Christian country as early as the fourth century.[2]

It is Origen who tells us that Thomas "received Parthia as his allotted region," and that "Andrew received Scythia,"[3] a statement which implies that the extension of Christianity into these two districts, the one directly east of Syria, the other consisting of little known regions indefinitely located at the north of the Euxine, was at least some time earlier than the third century, or no such traditions could have been then current. That points to a second century extension of Christianity beyond the confines of the empire in two directions. Then we have the famous journey of Pantænus, who resigned his professorial chair and the cultured society of Alexandria about A.D. 180 to go as a missionary to some far-off land known as "India," probably South Arabia, which was never conquered by the Romans, or, as Harnack suggests, "even the Axumitric kingdom,"[4] *i.e.* Abyssinia. There, as it was reported,[5] he already found a Christian Church, the origin of which was attributed to Bartholomew, using a Hebrew version of St. Matthew, that is to say, the "Gospel according to

[1] *Refuta.* vii. 19.

[2] See Sozomen, ii. 8.

[3] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* iii. 1.

[4] *Ibid.* v. 10; see Harnack, *Expansion of Christianity*, Eng. trans., vol. ii. p. 299.

[5] Observe Eusebius's cautious phrase, "He is *said* to have found there," etc., *Hist. Eccl.* v. 10.

the Hebrews." This then would be a Jewish Christian Church. The "Acts of Thomas" shows that Christianity had reached the north-western part of India itself, our modern India, as early as the third century. By the time of the council of Nicæa there were churches in Arabia east of the Dead Sea, a region over which the empire had very little control. The gospel was carried up the Nile to the towns and villages of Egypt at an early time, and thence it penetrated the Soudan—"Æthiopia," the south country beyond Philæ—in the fourth century, till perhaps it reached the mission in Abyssinia, which had entered Africa from the east.

When we pass over to the fourth century the accounts of foreign missions and the experiences of the churches in the outlying regions round about the empire become more definite and explicit. The Armenian Church, with the story of its famous apostle Gregory the Illuminator; the Ethiopian and Abyssinian Church, the origin of which is traced to the labours of two shipwrecked young travellers, Frumentius and Ædesius; the Georgian Church, springing from the influence of a woman—the Armenian slave girl Nunia; the Syrian Church in India, which claims St. Thomas as its founder—all of them independent churches in regions outside the Roman Empire—will claim our attention later on; because as they have remained in independent existence on to our own day we shall want to know something about the course of their history right down the centuries. But incidents in connection with two outlying communities of Christians lead the interest connected with them to be concentrated for us in the early period, and therefore seem to demand our consideration at once. These incidents are the persecution of the Persian Christians and the mission of Ulfilas among the Goths.

1. The origin of Christianity in Persia is hidden in obscurity; but, as we have seen, in all probability it was an offshoot of the activity of the Syrian Church at Edessa, which in turn must be traced back to Antioch, the earliest great missionary church. In the district of Garamæa, east of the Tigris, and south-east of Mosul, there appear to

have been Christians as early as A.D 170.[1] This was then part of the Parthian Empire, made famous in history by the brilliant career of the great Queen Zenobia, which was superseded by the new Persian Empire, known as the Sassanid kingdom, in the year 227. Zenobia had shown Christian sympathies—of a sort. When in possession of Antioch she had petted and protected the gorgeous heretic Paul of Samosata; but then he had been condemned by the Christians of the Roman Empire, through whom perhaps she thought to spite Rome. By protecting and patronising heretical Christians she gained the enthusiastic support of one section of her subjects. It was the very opposite with the Persians when they founded an empire on the ruins of Zenobia's splendid dominion. They were equally inimical to Rome; but by this time Paul and his faction had passed away. Besides, the Persian Empire did not include Syria. The Christians in Persia were in communion with their brethren in the Roman Empire. This fact roused suspicion of disloyalty in the minds of their masters. It was feared that they were disaffected subjects, spies in communication with the terrible enemy in the West, perhaps conspirators plotting for the downfall of the Sassanid throne. The adoption of Christianity by Constantine and the growing combination of Church and State that followed, immensely aggravated this suspicion. In the Roman Empire the Church was now treated as a State department. Therefore, for subjects of Persia to be communicating with the Church at Constantinople would appear to be much the same as for English Roman Catholics in the times of Elizabeth and the Stuarts to be in communication with fellow-Romanists in Spain and France. Whatever may have been their real sentiments before the persecution broke out, there can be no doubt that when it was raging the Persian Christians would look with longing eyes to their brethren safely sheltered within the Roman Empire.

[1] Moeller, *Hist. of Christian Church*, Eng. trans., vol. i. p. 104, gives authorities for this statement, drawn from the Syrian Acts of Persian martyrs.

There was another factor in this persecution which added fuel to the fire, or which perhaps had kindled the fire at the first. This was the antagonism of the Magi. That the leaders of so enlightened a religion as that of Persia should have stirred up a persecution of the Christians is a plain proof of their vitality and vigour. In earlier days a similar influence had roused violent opposition to Christianity in the Roman Empire. Thus the Valerian persecution was instigated by a famous magician, Macrianus. We must not confound the ancient order of Persian Magi with the vulgar charlatans who professed magic in the Western world. And yet the science of the Magi itself was fast degenerating into magic, a practice against which the Church waged deadly war, accusing it of alliance with the devil.

The great Persian persecution of the Christians broke out under Sapor, whose reign was extended to the extraordinary length of seventy years. His father had died before his birth, and since the crown was then placed on the spot that was supposed to conceal the future heir, the years of his reign are reckoned from a time earlier than his appearance in the world. The Magi began to work on Sapor's mind when he was a youth, and there were many violent deaths of Christians in consequence during the early part of his reign. The first of them are dated two years after the council of Nicæa (A.D. 327). But these cases are scarcely noticed in comparison with the army of martyrs that fell in Sapor's thirtieth year (A.D. 343) and during the succeeding thirty-five years, over the whole of which the persecution was spread intermittently. The diptychs of the Persian Church celebrate the names of 16,000 clergy, monks, and nuns. We have no means of estimating the number of the laity who suffered. At first there were many apostasies. But the wonder of the persecution is that as this proceeded down its path of blood through many years, instead of wearing out the patience of the Church, it welded her metal to the temper of fine steel. According to the confession of the acts of

the martyrs the religious character of the Christians was low at first, but as in the case of the two great Roman persecutions—the Decian and the Diocletian—the fires of tribulation purged the Church.

The immediate motive of this especially severe persecution at the exact time when it broke out appears to have been political. The Magi had been urging the king to suppress their rivals all along. But now Sapor saw the Christian bishop James at Nisibis keeping that city firm in its allegiance to the Roman Emperor Constantius, so that it successfully withstood two sieges by the Persians. This was a clear case of action on the part of the Church in favour of Rome against Persia, although not within his own territory. It was enough to embitter him against those of James's friends and co-religionists whom he had in his power.

The persecution began with a heavy capitation tax on the Christians. Their bishop Symeon proved himself to be a very haughty passive-resister. "Christ," he answered, "who had freed His Church by His death would not permit His people to bow to such a yoke." Like the young officer Marcellus who had spoken to his superiors scornfully about "your emperors," during the Diocletian persecution, because his sovereign was Christ, and like the "fifth monarchy men" in the seventeenth century, Symeon seemed to think that his status as a Christian involved escape from the authority of the civil government; or if he did not go so far as that, he took it as a full justification for refusing to pay an iniquitous tax. He was arrested, tried, urged in vain to worship the sun, and condemned to perish in torture. At the same time other martyrs were beheaded. The very day of Symeon's martyrdom a fresh and more severe edict was issued against the Christians. It only stimulated the heroism of the martyrs. Sapor's queen being attacked by an unknown disease, the Jewish physician who attended her attributed it to the practice of witchcraft by two Christian ladies of high station. They were stripped, tied to posts, and hacked to pieces, and then the queen was led through the yet reeking portions of

their remains. The stories of the persecution, its horrors and its heroism, are too numerous to repeat. A glance over them reveals the fact that a great number of the martyrdoms occurred in the district of Adiabene, which appears to have been almost wholly Christian. But multitudes fell in all the provinces. At first only the clergy were aimed at; nevertheless the persecution was not confined to the official leaders of the Church.

When we next meet with Persian Christians we find them adopting Nestorianism; and the later fortunes of Christianity in Persia will be considered in the division of this volume dealing with the Nestorians.

2. The other series of events occurring beyond the borders of the Roman Empire during the earlier period of our history that now claims our attention is found in connection with the story of Ulfilas and the conversion of the Goths.[1] These people of our own Teutonic stock, whose repeated invasions were among the most serious troubles of the Roman emperors, first meet us in the lands north of the lower Danube during the third century of the Christian era. Their traditional earlier connection with Scandinavia has not been verified; but the fact that in the restless migrations of their teeming populations they had swept eastward from the ancient forests of Germany, and thus early begun the characteristic colonising habit of which their English representatives, the Jutes, gave evidence, is the probable explanation of their appearance in Eastern Europe, wedged in between the Sclavs on the north and the Greeks on the south. Still pressing onward, during the course of the fourth century they poured into the Roman province of Dacia in repeated and disastrous raids, the first of which occurred in the year 238, ravaging Mœsia in the reign of Philip the Arabian, and later defeating the Emperor Decius, who fell while fighting them (A.D. 251).[2] Thus indirectly they saved the Church by putting an end to

[1] Formerly but erroneously identified with the Getæ.

[2] Zosimus, i. 19 ff.

the first persecution that was systematically planned by a determined emperor to effect its total destruction. During the next seventeen years they devastated Eastern Europe and Western Asia by land and sea as far as Trebizond; but at length they were defeated and driven back by the Emperor Claudius (A.D. 269), just about the time when the elder Theodosius was repulsing the Saxons in Britain. A wise compromise was now agreed upon. The Romans ceded the province of Dacia, north of the Danube, which Trajan had added to the empire, so that the river became the boundary between Roman and Goth, while the name Dacia was preserved by being transferred to the district south of the Danube (A.D. 274). The political sagacity of this arrangement was seen in the ensuing peace of ninety years' duration, only once seriously broken by an incursion of Alaric, which was successfully repelled after its brief, brilliant success. Under Ermanaric, in the fourth century, the Goths north of the Danube grew into a great power, conquering the Sclavs, and, according to their own historian Jornandis—who is not altogether reliable—extending their dominion as far as the Baltic.[1] Ermanaric was only a kind of overlord, for the Goths had no kings, and therefore when Socrates[2] describes a civil war as a contest between two rivals—Athanaric and Frithigern—for the sovereignty, we must understand this as a quarrel between two separate chieftains for the place of *primus inter pares*.[3] But the important fact in regard to the history of Christianity among the Goths is that these two chieftains followed opposite lines of policy both in relation to the Roman Empire and with reference to Christianity. The close neighbourhood of the two powers led to intercommunication and interaction. Athanaric took the side of a usurper in making war on the emperor, but afterwards came to terms with Valens. Christianity had already

[1] Jornandis, 23.

[2] *Hist. Eccl.* iv. 38.

[3] Ammianus calls Athanaric a "judge," *Hist.* xxvii. 5. According to Freeman, he would be the equivalent of an Anglo-Saxon *ealdorman* or *heretoga*. See Freeman's article "Goths" in *Encycl. Brit.*

penetrated into his dominions, and he had persecuted the converts severely. On the other hand, Frithigern had found it politic to cultivate the friendship of the empire, and therefore to be himself friendly to its religion, the type of which, we must remember, was Arianism, then favoured by the government.[1]

The actual beginnings of Christianity among the Goths cannot be traced. A twofold process was at work leading to the introduction of the gospel to the Teutonic tribes beyond the Danube. In the first place, Christian captives carried off in the Gothic raids of the empire brought their religion with them; and, inasmuch as every genuine Christian is bound to be a missionary, we are not surprised to learn that some of these captives made the gospel known among the heathen people with whom their lot was now cast.[2] In the second place, Goths served in the Roman army and there came under Christian influences, so that those who were converted, when they went back to their own country, would go as Christians ready to spread the new faith among their people. To these influences we must add that of fugitives from persecution in the empire, who took refuge among the more liberal "barbarians."

The earliest Gothic colony within the empire appears to have established itself at Crim—the Crimea—long before the Arian supremacy, to have become Christian of the Catholic type, and to have remained such throughout. There was a bishop of the Goths named Theophilus at the council of Nicæa (A.D. 325).[3] According to Philostorgius, raids as early as the reigns of Valerian and Gallienus had resulted in Christian captives planting the gospel among the Goths; among these captives, he says, were the ancestors of Ulfilas.[4]

[1] Sozomen, vi. 37; Socrates, iv. 33. [2] Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.* ii. 6.

[3] Socrates, ii. 41.

[4] Philostorgius, ii. 5. Athanasius, writing before the council of Nicæa, mentions both Scythians and Goths among barbarians who had received the gospel. Cf. Cyril, *Cat.* xvi. 22.

We may therefore be certain that this famous man was not the first to introduce Christianity to a Teutonic race. Nevertheless, it is with justice that Ulfilas has been described as "the Apostle of the Goths," because it was owing to his labours that a great part of the nation was won over to the faith of Christ. The discovery of a Gothic account of his life by one of his own disciples has enabled scholars to supplement and correct the prejudiced narratives of the Greek Church historians from a more authentic source.[1] There are reasons for doubting Philostorgius's statement that Ulfilas was a descendant of one of the Cappadocian captives.[2] His name is thoroughly Gothic, and his pupil Auxentius does not hint at a foreign parentage. He was born among the Goths in the year 311. We cannot test the statement of Socrates that he was converted by Theophilus, the bishop who attended the council of Nicæa. If that were correct, he would have been orthodox at first. But afterwards he was identified with one of the schools of Arianism. While quite young, probably in the year 332, when he was twenty-one years of age, he was sent to Constantinople, either as an envoy, or, as seems more likely considering his youth, as a hostage. Arianism was now dominant in the city, and naturally enough Ulfilas came under its influence. While at Constantinople he learnt Latin and Greek, and served in the minor order of a reader in the Church, probably working in the city as an evangelist to his fellow-countrymen

[1] See C. Anderson Scott, *Ulfilas, the Apostle of the Goths*, a book which is mainly founded on a Gothic MS. at the Louvre, discovered by Waitz in the year 1840, containing the life of Ulfilas by Auxentius, one of his pupils, and Arian bishop of Dorostorus (Silistria).

[2] Prof. Anderson Scott adduces three reasons—(1) Philostorgius, though himself a Cappadocian, writing forty years later, was less likely to know the origin of Ulfilas than people at Constantinople [surely a doubtful statement]; (2) since the Ostrogoths of the Crimea were the Gothic people who made raids on Cappadocia, it is improbable that a Cappadocian captive would be found among Goths of the Danube; (3) it is also improbable that young descendants in the third generation of captives from the empire would be sent to represent the Goths at Constantinople (*Ulfilas*, etc., pp. 50, 51).

among the imperial troops. In the year 341 he was ordained as a missionary by the Semi-Arian party and sent back to his own country to evangelise it. This fact throws an interesting sidelight on the period of fierce controversy which follows the council of Nicæa. As we read the Church histories we are in danger of regarding it as a time when religion was nothing but a battleground of angry polemics between the factions into which the Church was broken up. But this mission of Ulfilas is a sign that something better was to be seen in it, though that did not make so much noise. It is interesting also to observe that the missionary zeal was found among the Arians, whom the Nicene party were for ever denouncing and anathematising as impious infidels.

Ulfilas was thirty years of age when he set out on his great enterprise, and he continued in it for forty years of arduous toil, amid great perils and persecutions. He began among the Visigoths beyond the Danube, where he laboured for seven years with great success. He won so many converts that the pagan chief, who appears to have been wrongly identified with Athanaric, was roused to anger and commenced a persecution of his Christian people. Ulfilas then obtained permission from Constantius to retire with his converts across the Danube into Mœsia, within the confines of the empire, settling near the foot of the mountain range of Hæmus. In the year 360 he attended a council at Constantinople, called together by the Homœan party. It was the creed of this party to which he gave his assent—a creed, it will be remembered, devised for political reasons, in order to retain Arianism within the Church. It aimed at so doing by putting an end to controversy, by excluding all party watchwords—*homoousios, homoiousios,* and the rest, and affirming a simple likeness between the First and Second Persons in the Trinity.

There is no reason to doubt that Ulfilas was perfectly honest in the theological position he occupied. As an earnest missionary, more concerned with practical evan-

gelistic work than with theological controvery, he may have been thankful for a simple form of Christianity that he could make intelligible to his rough fellow-countrymen more easily than one which was involved in subtle Greek metaphysics. There is no ground for the malignant insinuation of orthodox Church writers, that Ulfilas adopted Arianism in a bargain with the Emperor Valens when seeking protection from the persecution of the pagan Goths. He states in his will that he had always held the same principles.[1] The probability is that the Goths were already Arians of the mild, non-metaphysical type. Arianism was strong in Mœsia and along the line of the Danube, and the natural explanation of the facts is that Ulfilas and his people were simply carried with the current of their times and became Arian without ever supposing that they were adopting a specifically heretical position.

The result, however, was curiously complicated. In the first place, it was a great thing for Europe that when the Goths poured over Italy and even captured Rome they came as a Christian people, reverencing and sparing the churches, and abstaining from those barbarities that accompanied the invasion of Britain by the heathen Saxons. But, in the second place, many of these simple Gothic Christians learned to their surprise that they were heretics, and that only when their efforts towards fraternising with their fellow-Christians in the orthodox Church were angrily resented.

Ulfilas supplemented his direct missionary work by his writings; above all, by his translation of the Bible into the Gothic language. For this purpose he had to create an alphabet, since previously the art of writing was unknown among the Goths. Thus he is really the founder of Teutonic literature—that great literature which afterwards blossomed out in Chaucer, Luther, Shakespeare, Goethe. Ulfilasus omitted the Book of Kings from his translation because of their warlike character — he considered that his people did not need Scriptural

[1] *Ego Ulphilas semper sic credidi.*

encouragement for fighting, being only too ready for it already.[1] Perhaps this is the first instance of a Bible expurgated on moral grounds.

Ulfilas's translation only exists in fragments, the most important of which is the *Codex Argenteus*, containing portions of the Gospels. This manuscript is described by Scrivener as "the most precious treasure of the university of Upsal."[2] It consists of quarto leaves of purple vellum, with letters in gold and silver. The date assigned to it is the fifth or early sixth century; that is to say, only about a century later than the time of Ulfilas himself. Other copies are the *Codex Carolinus* and the Ambrosian fragments published by Mai.[3] Ulfilas went to Constantinople in the year 380, and there he died, either that same year, or the next year—the year of the second œcumenical council, worn out with his heroic, lifelong toils and the anxieties for his people, which crowded upon his later years. He was succeeded by Selenas—a man accounted "well fitted to instruct the people in the Church."

The subsequent history of Gothic Christianity belongs to Western Christendom, since it follows the migration of the Goths. In Thracia, the home of its origin, it disappeared with the break-up of the nation in the year 395. But it became most important in the Gothic kingdom of Theodoric, which saw Arianism re-established for a time in Italy long after it had been extinguished in the Roman Empire. Under the influence of the same wave of emigration, it passed into Spain and across the Mediterranean to Africa, where at length it perished together with Chris-

[1] Philostorgius, ii. 5.

[2] *Introd. to the Criticism of the New Testament*, 4th edit. vol. ii. p. 146.

[3] Since Ulfilas was an Arian, the question arises, Did his heresy affect his translation of the Bible? Prof. Scott finds a faint indication of such influence in the crucial test of the text, Phil. ii. 6, where Ulfilas has the Gothic word *galeiko* as his rendering of the Greek ἴσα, although this word corresponds to the Greek ὅμοιος, the watchword of the mild Arians whom he represented. For the rest, his version has no suspicion of heresy. We must remember—(1) that the Greek-speaking Arians claimed the Scriptures to be on their side; and (2) that Ulfilas was neither an extreme nor a controversial Arian.

tianity itself. The last remnants of Gothic Christianity in Africa disappeared under the devastating scourge of the Arab invasion, to give place to Islam and its blight upon civilisation. Meanwhile, at its old home in the East, another race and another type of Church life had blotted out all signs and all memories of Ulfilas's Church, its victories and its martyrdoms.

DIVISION II

THE MODERN GREEK CHURCH

CHAPTER I

CYRIL LUCAR AND THE REFORMATION

(*a*) Cyrilli Lucaris, *Confessio*; Smith, *Vit. Cyr. Lucar*; *Collectanea de Cyrillo Lucario*, 1707; Palmer, *The Eastern Catholic Communion*, 1853, and *The Orthodox and the Non-Jurors*, 1868.

(*b*) Neale, *Patriarchate of Alexandria*; Ranke, *The Ottoman Empire*, Eng. trans., 1843; Findlay, *Greece under Ottoman and Venetian Domination*, 1856; Kyriakos, *Geschichte der Orientalischen Kirchen von 1453–1898*, Ger. trans., 1902.

THE fall of Constantinople was quickly followed by the subjugation of almost all the remnants of the Byzantine Empire. Even the Venetians and the Knights of St. John were swept from the Levant by the victorious Turks. The consequence was the subjection of the Greek Church to Mohammedan despotism. The sultan recognised the Church as a corporate institution, instituted and maintained official relations with the bishops, and issued specific regulations for the management of the Christians. The forcible conversion of the followers either of Jesus or of Moses, regarded as two prophets of Islam, was forbidden by the Koran. While obstinate idolaters were to be slain, Jews and Christians were to be allowed to live and practise their religious rites, though not to proselytise. But both were treated with contempt, subjected to specific exactions and disabilities, and often liable to unchecked abuse and outrage.

Christians were required to pay a capitation tax (called the *haratsh*), from which Mussulman inhabitants of the same provinces were exempt. But the most cruel and degrading burden laid upon them was the tribute of children which went to maintain the famous institution of the janissaries.[1] A tithe of the young population, one boy in five, was demanded by the government. Every two or three years government officers went through the towns and villages selecting the healthiest and strongest boys to be trained for service as soldiers of the sultan. They were taken quite young, and carefully educated in Mohammedanism. The institution was a unique characteristic of the Ottoman Empire. It was originated by Orkhan, about the year 1329, but organised much more thoroughly by his son and successor Murad, who has therefore been generally regarded as its founder. By this means the sultans were able to maintain a strong fighting force unattached to the pashas and unaffected by local interests, a rigorously disciplined and highly trained standing army absolutely subject to the imperial authority.

This, then, was the secret of the power of the Ottoman Empire when at its zenith it boasted of ruling three continents. At the time of the fall of Constantinople the number of janissaries was 12,000; under Suleiman the Legislator it rose to 40,000. But in later times these janissaries themselves became a menace to the weakened central authority, exercising their power for their common interests like the Roman armies under the feebler emperors. In the year 1566 they obtained from Selim II. the right to make recruits of their own children. Thus they became a self-contained caste. At last the decline of the Greek population of the empire, which was the chief tax-producing element, rendered the serious drain upon it involved by the tribute of children disastrous to the finances of the State. At the same time the growing turbulence of the janissaries made them a constant source of anxiety to their master.

During the reign of Mohammed IV. (A.D. 1649–1687)

[1] See Kyriakos, p. 9 ff.

this unnatural method of recruiting the army came to an end. The last recorded case occurred in the year 1676. Meanwhile its long continuance was a proof of the abject degradation of the people who endured it for centuries. Not only was it a cruel outrage on the family; it was a barefaced insult to Christianity, since it was an organised instrument of apostasy. How came the Greeks to bow their necks to the humiliating yoke, instead of preferring death to the dishonour of it? In other respects their peaceful submission to the Ottoman rule is not surprising. This rule was not always harsh. In the Turkish Empire the peasant was at least a free man, while in Christian countries at the same time he was a serf, subject to cruel feudal tyranny. Still, in spite of all that is unheroic in the attitude of the Greeks, it is to the credit of the Church that she held on her course through centuries of abuse and hardships; for all along the Christians were suffering from wrongs and miseries which they could easily have escaped by becoming converts to Islam. It is not to be supposed that none took this tempting course. The truth is, immense numbers did become Mohammedans. Manuel, the last of the Palæologi, joined the religion of the destroyer of his ancestors' throne. But these facts do not derogate from the stubborn fidelity of the multitudes who resisted the temptation to apostatise; on the contrary, they enhance the martyr-like character of it. The Greek Church has always gloried in her orthodoxy; she has more reason to be proud of her very existence, more ground for congratulation in the fact that she has not been worn down by the continuous friction of centuries of abuse and contempt.

Unhappily little can be said to the credit of the highest officials of the Church during these desolate ages. For the most part the simple peasants who clung to their faith did so against all inducements to abandon it. The case of their superiors presents a grim contrast to this unworldly fidelity. The patriarchs of Constantinople were now chosen and appointed by the sultan, although the fiction of a synodical election was more or less ostentatiously preserved; and they

generally proved to be pliant instruments in the hands of the government. That is not very surprising, since they were selected with this end in view. They commonly obtained the post by bribery and held it by sycophancy. Thus the Church was confronted with the unedifying spectacle of her chief priest cringing before the infidel. In return for his subserviency the patriarch of Constantinople was allowed to summon synods and to hold courts, not only for ecclesiastical, but even for civil cases, among his own people.[1]

The patriarchs were frequently deposed by the sultans quite arbitrarily, and they often bought their places back again; but some fell into perpetual disgrace, and some were strangled. At one time there were fourteen patriarchs in fifteen years. Some of the patriarchs were of notoriously degraded character. The patriarch Raphael was said to have been a confirmed drunkard ignorant of Greek.

Following the example in high places, bishops bought their positions, and were used by the government as magistrates and tax-gatherers. The orthodox patriarchs of Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem were very differently situated. These chief pastors were still elected by synods of local bishops as in older, happier times. But they had very little power, most of the Christian inhabitants of their provinces being heretics out of communion with their church. The one patriarch who exercised effective control over the Greek Church was regarded by patriotic Greeks themselves as a renegade and a traitor to their cause.

[1] Professor Kyriakos states that the patriarch of Constantinople not only did not lose power under the Turkish government, but even increased his privileges (*Geschichte*, p. 26). This is a most misleading statement. Certainly in external form and range of influence such was the case, and that in two ways—(1) This patriarch was now set over all the orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire, including those of the other three patriarchates—the patriarchates of Antioch, Jerusalem, and Alexandria, of course only those of the orthodox Church, now known locally as Melchite. (2) To his ecclesiastical authority was added civil jurisdiction. On the other hand, he could not call his life his own if in any matter he offended his despotic master. Moreover, what he gained in civil power was more than counterbalanced by what he lost in spiritual influence, as the nominee and officer of the hated Moslem power.

A melancholy characteristic of the depression and degeneration of the later Greek Church is the absence of conspicuous names from its dismal history. If there were any village Hampdens or Miltons, the former started no successful rebellions and the latter were mute and inglorious. During outbreaks of popular fanaticism, and under the cold, calculating persecutions instigated by the government from time to time in opposition to its professed policy, no doubt the noble army of martyrs was enriched by the addition of many a humble hero of the faith. But either the ability or the opportunity for any conspicuous feat of fidelity was lacking. The story of the Church had left the noble highlands where striking landmarks rivet our attention and descended to a featureless plain with the monotony of the desert. There was more learning silently cherished in the monasteries than is commonly supposed, and a higher standing of education was maintained among the Greeks than among most of their contemporaries in Europe. Moreover, Greek merchants grew rich in spite of fiscal disabilities. But there was no intellectual originality, no literature of genius, no movement of distinction.

In all this barren age there is just one name that has emerged out of the fog of oblivion into European fame, and that largely owing to the accident of Western connections. This is the name of Cyril Lucar, patriarch of Alexandria, and subsequently of Constantinople, who lived at the time of the Reformation, and became the courageous author of an abortive attempt to introduce the principles of Protestantism into the East.

The Greek Church came into contact with Lutheranism under the patriarchs Joseph II. and Jeremiah II., and later with Calvinism by means of the activity of Cyril Lucar. In the year 1559, Melanchthon, taking advantage of the return of Demetrius, a deacon of Constantinople who had been staying at Wittenburg, sent a copy of the Augsburg confession to the patriarch Joseph, claiming agreement between its tenets and the doctrines of the Eastern Church. It was received in chill silence, the prosaic interpretation

of which may be that since it only existed in Latin and German—languages not studied at Constantinople—the patriarch did not put himself to the trouble of getting his deacon to explain it to him. Fifteen years later (A.D. 1574), Martin Crusius produced a Greek version of the confession and sent it to Jeremiah II., who was then the patriarch of Constantinople, and received in return a polite reply. Thus encouraged, Crusius proceeded to point out how Lutheranism differed from Romanism and to express a hope of union with the Eastern Church. Jeremiah's reply is uncompromising. The only way to union with the orthodox Church is to "follow the apostolical and synodical decrees." There can be no broadening out of a common basis of union; the sole possibility is conversion to the Greek Church and admission into that communion as it now stands in its changeless rigour of doctrine and discipline. In the year 1578, Jeremiah received a fuller account of Lutheranism; but nothing came of any of these Lutheran overtures.

Cyril's action was on different lines. It was at once less ambitious and more courageous. He knew the Greek Church too well to ignore its errors or imagine that in its present condition any fusion with a Protestant Church was either practicable or desirable. His aim was a reformation within the Eastern Church on Calvinistic lines—not the High Church idea of the reunion of Christendom, but the Protestant conception of a true gospel and a pure Church.

Cyril Lucar was born at Candia, the chief town of Crete, in the year 1572. The island was then under the mild rule of the Venetians, who allowed more religious liberty than any other power. Several Greeks of interest in the movements of this time came from Crete. But Cyril was sent to Alexandria at the early age of ten, and there put under the tuition of his uncle Meletius Pega —another Cretan — who had been in Italy and seen enough there to return with strong anti-Roman convictions. Before he was twelve years old the lad was sent to Venice, and thence to Padua, where he came under the influence of an

anti-Roman teacher Maximus, afterwards bishop of Cerigo. Subsequently he travelled in Germany and Switzerland, perhaps also in England during the reign of Elizabeth, though that is doubtful.[1] In the year 1595 he returned to Alexandria and was ordained a deacon. During this period of his life we find him for a time at Constantinople, though on what business nobody knows. The Greeks having held a conference at Wilna with several Lutheran nobles and divines to seek a basis of union between the two communions, although with no results, Sigismund, the king of Poland, an energetic champion of the papacy, forbade the propagation of Greek Church doctrines in his dominions under severe penalties. Meletius then sent Cyril to Poland on behalf of the cause of the Eastern Church, and he settled down in Wilna for a time, supporting himself by teaching the Greek language. He was now like an ambassador from the Greek Church, an intermediary between Poland and the East. The king of Poland sent him to Meletius, exhorting the patriarch to revere the primacy of St. Peter and acknowledge the pope. Meletius returned a respectful but negative reply, and at the same time formally appointed Cyril his exarch in Sclavonia. Meanwhile Sigismund began to persecute in the interest of the Uniats—the party in favour of uniting the Greek Church with Rome on the Roman terms. Necessarily Cyril had to "lie low" if he would remain in Poland while this tempest was sweeping over the country. But there is no evidence that he yielded any more than by keeping silence. At a later time his bitter enemy the Jesuit Sarga circulated a report to the effect that he had written a letter to the archbishop of Löwenberg professing his adherence to the Church of Rome. The letter was a forgery and the accusation based upon it a barefaced calumny.

On his return to Alexandria Cyril was sent to his native island, to collect the usual contributions for the patriarchate. In the year 1602 he succeeded Meletius as orthodox patriarch of Alexandria. While he was in this

[1] See Neale, *Patriarch of Alexandria*, vol. ii. p. 360.

office the English king, James I., offered him free education for a Greek whom he might send over for the purpose. The fortunate recipient of this favour was Metrophanes Critopulus, who sadly disappointed his patrons by his extravagance and pretentiousness. Probably he was a clever if not a high-principled young man. In Germany the Lutherans assign to his authorship, "A Confession of the Catholic and Apostolic Church of the East." On his return to Egypt he became a metropolitan, and he ultimately attained to the patriarchate of Alexandria—of course, like Cyril, for the "orthodox" Greek Church there. The bulk of the Egyptians were of the Monophysite Coptic Church.

Cyril opened up a correspondence with Archbishop Laud, whom he presented with an Arabic Pentateuch "as a sign of brotherly love"; this is now preserved in Oxford, at the Bodleian Library. When on his travels he had secured a fifth century manuscript of the Scriptures at Mount Athos. This was the oldest accessible Greek Bible, the two older manuscripts which scholars now use being as yet unknown—namely, the Vatican, locked up in the pope's library, and the Sinaitic, lying undiscovered in the monastery of St. Catherine. All English students have reason to think of the name of Cyril Lucar with gratitude, for he presented his precious manuscript to the English nation in the person of King Charles I. It now lies open to view under a glass case in the King's Library at the British Museum—one of the most valuable of all the valuable treasures owned by Great Britain. We know it as the Alexandrian manuscript, not like the Sinaitic as named after the place where it was found, nor because it represents the Alexandrian text—which is the text of the Vatican and the Sinaitic manuscripts—but simply because its donor was the patriarch of Alexandria, so that it came to England immediately from that city.

Cyril commenced his reforming efforts in the Greek Church while at Alexandria. In the year 1621 he became patriarch of Constantinople, where he still laboured in the

interest of the Reformation. He was succeeded at Alexandria by Gerasius, another Cretan, but a staunch upholder of old-fashioned Greek orthodoxy.

Cyril drew up a *Confession of Faith*, a perusal of which makes it clear that he had strong leanings towards Calvinism. But how far he went in this direction has been a matter of dispute. His friends of the orthodox Church, and also English High Churchmen anxious for union with the Greek Church, have endeavoured to minimise his Protestanism when they have not thrown over Cyril in despair as a heretic. It is necessary, therefore, to have some of his statements before us in their exact phraseology if we would judge for ourselves where he stands. He begins with an affirmation of the Trinity—with respect to which all the leading reformers were agreed; but he affirms the Greek doctrine that the Holy Spirit proceeds *from the Father by the Son.* Article iii. is as follows: "We believe that God, before the foundation of the world, predestinated His elect to glory without respect of their working, and that there was none other cause which impelled Him to this election than His good pleasure and Divine mercy; in like manner that before the foundation of the world He reprobated whom He would reprobate; of which reprobation, if a man will regard the absolute right and sovereignty of God, he will without doubt find the cause to be the will of God; but if again he regards the laws and rules of good order which the Divine will employs for the government of the world, he will find it to be justice, for God is long-suffering, but yet just." Here we have the full, unqualified Calvinistic doctrine of election, including reprobation, logically supra-lapsarian, though the final clause seems to introduce a qualification by insisting on justice, but that only dogmatically without any attempt at a reconciliation with the earlier statement. The confession decidedly affirms baptismal regeneration — in which it agrees with the majority of the reformers. It declares that Christ alone "does the work of a true and proper Mediator" —a phrase which by its defining attributes "true and

proper" has been said not to exclude the secondary intercession of saints.

Article ix. is as follows: "We believe that none can be saved without faith. By faith we mean that which justifies in Jesus Christ, which the life and death of our Lord Jesus Christ produced for us, and which the gospel preaches, and without which it is impossible to please God."

In treating of the doctrine of the Church, Cyril says: "The Church which is called Catholic containeth all the faithful in Christ," etc. Then he proceeds, "There are particular visible churches," etc. In Article xii. he distinctly affirms that the Church can err—a statement as abhorrent to an orthodox Greek as to a Roman Catholic. Article xiii. declares that, "We believe that man is justified by faith, without works. But when we speak of faith we mean the correlative of faith, which is the righteousness of Christ on which faith takes hold," etc.

If this is not Protestanism, what is Protestantism? It is not even Melanchthon's mild and tempered synergism; it is nearer to Calvinism than to Lutheranism. On the great dividing question, the fundamental question of the final authority, Cyril is decidedly Protestant. He says, "The authority of Holy Scripture is far greater than that of the Church, for it is a different thing to be taught by the Holy Spirit from being taught by man. Man may through ignorance err and deceive, and be deceived. But the Holy Spirit neither deceiveth nor is deceived, nor is subject to error, but is infallible." This reminds us of Chillingworth's doctrine—"The Bible the religion of Protestants."

In June 1627, Nicodemus Mentaxa, a native of Cephalonia and a monk, who had been to England, arrived at Constantinople with a printing press and a fount of Greek types. The English ambassador housed them; but the Jesuits tried to gain over Mentaxa. They plied him with threats; and at length they accused him of treason because he printed the royal arms of England at the beginning and end of his book. Mentaxa began the printing of Cyril's

confession, but the Jesuits broke in and seized the types. Cyril then sent the document to Geneva, where the confession was printed in a Latin version. The publication of it created a sensation in Europe. Here was the first ecclesiastic in the Greek Church professing the most thorough-going Protestant tenets, even echoing arrant Calvinism! Most people took the document for a forgery. Then Cyril issued a new edition of the confession, this time in Greek, and with significant additions. He declared that the faithful ought to read the Holy Scriptures. The doctrines necessary to be believed, he said, may be discovered for themselves by regenerate persons, the Holy Spirit aiding them, and Scripture being compared with Scripture—most outspoken Protestantism again, and that on its basal principle and central point of difference from the Church, the question of the source of authority in doctrine! On the other hand, Cyril says nothing about the authority of the Church. He adds an expression of his detestation of the adoration of images—practically the chief popular religious function in his own Church.

Cyril did not find his patriarchate a bed of roses. No patriarch could have been at his ease in the office under the anomalous circumstances, but a reformer amidst stereotyped Eastern orthodoxy and papal intrigue was doubly threatened in this post of danger. The Greeks, however, did not at first trouble themselves to interfere with their patriarch, and it was by the machinations of his most deadly enemies, the Jesuits, that he was molested. Cyril issued a pastoral calling upon the faithful to withdraw from communion with all members of the Latin Church. But he had not the authority to maintain his policy. Five times he was banished; and five times he was restored to his office. He was fortunate in having for his friend the grand vizier, who was not to be deceived by the lies that were circulated about him. At last his enemies found their chance. The Sultan Amurath was absent from Constantinople and marching to Bagdad, when the Jesuits contrived to get a message sent to him informing

him that Cyril was carrying on treasonable correspondence with the Cossacks. Anxious in the prospect of war, unable to investigate the charge at a distance, in hasty anger, Amurath ordered the patriarch to be executed. Cyril was strangled with a bow-string, and his body flung into the sea, on the 27th of June, 1638, in the sixty-sixth year of his age, and the thirty-sixth of his two patriarchates. Some fishermen found the body, and it was buried at night on an island in the bay of Nicomedia.

Professor Kyriakos considers that Cyril Lucar "must be numbered among the first scholars of his time."[1] Whether he should be admitted to that position in an era of encyclopædic learning among the men of the new enlightenment in Germany may be doubted. But there can be no doubt that in the East he stood absolutely alone, the one brilliant star of his age. Better than that, he aimed at a genuine reformation, although this was on lines of Western theology for which his people were in no way prepared. It would be preposterous to look for reform of the Greek Church by means of its conversion to Calvinism.

Cyril was followed in the patriarchate of Constantinople by his namesake at Berœa, who summoned a synod within three months of his predecessor's death. This synod anathematised the confession and also Cyril Lucar, betraying no doubt that he was its author. It affirmed the duty of Christian priests to repress all heresy to the utmost of their power. Cyril Lucar was described as "an intruder into the throne of Constantinople, abounding with the poison of the deadliest heresy"; he was especially condemned for teaching "that the bread offered at the altar and also the wine are not changed by the blessing of the priest and the descent of the Holy Spirit into the real body and blood of Christ"; and anathematised as an "Iconoclast" and "worse than an Iconoclast." The decrees of the synod were signed by the three patriarchs, including Metrophanes of Alexandria, who had owed so much to the murdered patriarch—an instance of base ingratitude.

[1] *Geschichte*, p. 145.

In the year 1642 another synod took a significant course. It condemned Cyril's confession and Calvinism together, thus plainly showing that the bishops perceived the connection between them; this synod did not name Cyril as the author of the obnoxious document. But in the synod of Jassy in Moldavia, which was held a little later, this confession was again attributed to Cyril. Among the bishops assembled at Jassy was Peter Mogila, the Russian ecclesiastic, who issued a counterblast in the form of another confession of faith which came to be accepted as a standard test of orthodoxy. It was not till thirty-four years after Cyril's death that a public official denial of his authorship of the confession that bears his name, was put forth. This was at the famous synod of Bethlehem, which Dositheus, the patriarch of Jerusalem—himself a Cretan—took the opportunity of the dedication of the new church in the year 1672 to gather together there. The synod condemned the Calvinistic confession and denied that Cyril Lucar was its author. A patriarch of Constantinople emitting such poison! The idea was too horrible! It could not be so! We can appreciate the psychological attitude. But in view of sober historical criticism, can we attach any real value to this repudiation? The further back we go, the closer and surer is Cyril's connection with the confession. A late denial of it to which the policy of convenience strongly urged has no weight whatever.[1]

[1] Moreover, there is plenty of collateral evidence showing that the confession was quite in accordance with Cyril's views expressed elsewhere, and demonstrating his essential Protestantism. Thus he writes to the archbishop of Spalatro, in the year 1618, stating that for three years he has compared the doctrine of the Greek and Latin Churches with that of the Reformed, and adding as the result of this prolonged study, "I left the Fathers and took for my guide Scripture and the analogy of faith alone. At length, through the grace of God, because I discovered that the cause of the reformers was the more just and the more in accordance with the doctrine of Christ, I embraced it." What could be more explicit than that? He contiuues, "I can no longer endure to hear a man say that the comments of human tradition are of equal weight with Holy Scripture." Then he states with approval the Calvinistic doctrine of original sin. He professes to affirm what he calls "the Greek doctrine of the sacraments"; but he repudiates the "chimera of transubstantiation." It must be remembered

In opposition to the anathematised confession the council endorsed Peter Mogila's confession. That was thoroughly Oriental. But this council in its antagonism to Calvinism went further and leaned towards Rome. It adopted a modified doctrine of purgatory, declaring that a certain period of suffering in Hades would be assigned to "those who had begun to repent, but who had not brought forth works meet for repentance." The synod of Bethlehem in a small way corresponds in the Greek Church to the council of Trent in the Roman Catholic Church. It is a deliberate condemnation of the Reformation and re-endorsement of the old teaching and practice.

Although Cyril's attempt to originate a reformation in the Greek Church had ended in failure, this fact must not be set down to the brave man's discredit. He had not displayed any intellectual originality; he had not developed reformed doctrine from within his Church; he had only tried to transplant an exotic, and it is not surprising that this would not take root in a strange soil. The Reformation in England was not indigenous. It too was a foreign importation, first from Wittenberg, then from Geneva. But the case of the remote Eastern Church is very different. Greek thought had been rarely much interested in movements of the Western mind. It was hardly touched by the Novatian and Donatist schisms, and but slightly affected by the great Pelagian controversy. We should not have expected therefore that it would

that the Greeks had never worked out a metaphysical theory of the transmutation of the elements as the Latins had done, and had never accepted the Roman Catholic theory of essence and accidents, leaving the subject a mystery. But their doctrine was practically the same as the Roman doctrine, which indeed first appeared in the East, most distinctly, for instance, in Gregory of Nyssa. Now Cyril denies it. He asserts that only the faithful participate—a Calvinistic idea going even beyond Luther, who held that the unworthy do receive the body of Christ, but to their hurt, and certainly as foreign to the Greek as to the Latin Church. Then Cyril goes on to denounce the popular cult of icons. "As to image worship," he writes, "it is impossible to say how pernicious under present circumstances it is." He also pronounces against the invocation of saints—all Protestant and some of them advanced Calvinistic declarations.

have been much moved by such a thoroughly Western agitation as that of the Reformation. But this is not all. The times were not ripe. In the East there had been no renaissance, no intellectual awakening as in the West. There had been no precursors of a reformation such as the German mystics, no stirring of conscience, no hunger and thirst for better things. The world needs "the man and the hour." Perhaps Cyril was not the man; he had neither Luther's passionate energy nor Calvin's masterful will. But if he had possessed both qualities he would have failed because the hour had not sounded. The blow may be struck; but there will be no explosion if the dynamite is not ready. The Greek Church was still in the patristic period. It had not advanced beyond John of Damascus. To Eastern Christendom, the new age, when, as the enthusiastic Ulric von Hutten declared, "it is a joy to live," had not arrived. Will this ever arrive?

There is one fact of a more specific character that must not be left out of account when we consider the heroic career of Cyril and his ultimate failure. Whatever views we may hold with regard to the question of an establishment of religion and the right relations of Church and State, we must perceive the anomaly of the Greek situation. For a Christian Church to be officially connected with a Mohammedan government could not but be an unholy alliance. When Cyril accepted the position of patriarch of Constantinople he put himself in a false position. In one way he gained freedom for his attempted innovations. The Ottoman government was more tolerant than most Christian governments of his time. While Spain burnt its heretics, the sultan was magnanimously indifferent to the quarrels among his Christian subjects, or perhaps he was ready to welcome them as weakening the power of the rival of Islam. At all events, as the officially recognised head of the Church owing his appointment to the sultan, Cyril could pursue his own policy with a large measure of independence. But he paid a dear price for that

independence. In proportion as he stood aloof from the Greeks, sheltered by Turkish patronage, he lost influence over his compatriots. His official position neutralised his religious mission. He was bound to fail for the reason that "no man can serve two masters."

Before passing from this disappointing passage of history, it may be convenient to glance at a later approach to the Eastern Church from the West, in the quaint action of the English non-jurors. Most people will now consider these worthy men to have been quite wrong-headed. A little knot of conscientious "passive-resisters" to the settlement under William and Mary, they contained some of the saintliest souls in the Church of England, among others Bishop Ken, the author of well-known morning and evening hymns. No one can doubt their sincere conscientiousness or their deep piety. Now it happened in the year 1713 that Arsenius the archbishop of Thebais was in England on one of those many humiliating begging expeditions to which the representatives of the Greek Church were repeatedly driven by the penury of their flock. Here he came in contact with the non-jurors, and this led them to open a correspondence with the Eastern patriarch through Peter the Great, then at the height of his power in Russia. In the year 1717 they asked the tsar to send their proposals to the patriarchs, as from "the Catholic remnant of the British Churches." It would seem that neither Peter nor the Eastern prelates at first suspected the isolated position of the non-jurors or their comparative insignificance. Indeed, so obscure was the movement on the English side, that it was not till after some years that news of it reached Archbishop Wade. Immediately he learnt what was going on—which was in the year 1724—he wrote to Chrysanthus, the patriarch of Jerusalem, exposing the true position of affairs. This pricked the bubble. The non-juror's dream was shattered in a moment.

CHAPTER II

THE LATER GREEK CHURCH UNDER THE TURKS

(*a*) Ricaut, *State of the Ottoman Empire*, 1670, and *Present State of the Greek and Armenian Churches*, 1679; Smith, *De Græcæ hodierno Statu*, 1680; Covel, *Some Account of the Greek Church*, 1722.

(*b*) Neale, *Holy Eastern Church*; Ranke, *The Ottoman Empire*, 1843; Findlay, *Greece under Ottoman and Venetian Domination*, 1856, and *The Greek Revolution*, 1861; W. A. Phillips, *War of Greek Independence*, 1897; "Odysseus," *Turkey in Europe*, 1900; *Cambridge Modern History*, vol. x. chap. vi., 1907; Kyriakos, *Geschichte der Orient. Kirchen*, 1902; Silbernage, *Verfassung und gegenwärtiger Bestand sämtlicher Kirchen des Orients*, 1904.

THE later history of the Greek Church need not detain us, for although Greece has never enjoyed the happiness of the country whose annals are dull, the page is no longer lit up by the presence of great men or fresh ideas. For more than two centuries the Church was dragged through the depths of degradation. The rapid succession of patriarchs was maintained at Constantinople, precarious, subservient. The provincial bishops — subject to the patriarch, who was subject to the sultan—were entrusted with a measure of local control over their flocks. Another order of Greek officials serving under the Turkish government consisted of the "Phanariots," who derived their name from the quarter of Constantinople which was their centre. These men had the charge of the taxation, the chief concern of the Ottoman government, which was often too weak to protect its subjects from attack and outrage, and wretchedly indifferent to the administration

of justice, that should have been the first object of its existence, but always energetic in the collection of the taxes. This odious task was entrusted to local authorities drawn from among the Greeks, who were despised and hated by their compatriots, like the Jewish publicans in the time of Christ. After the bishops and the Phanariots, there were no people of any power or influence among the Greeks. Hospitals and charities disappeared for lack of support. The monks were so poor that they went about visiting the markets with icons and cattle for sale. Libraries were stripped of their treasures in ancient manuscripts, which were sold to any chance purchasers and so scattered in all directions beyond hope of recovery. In course of time the central government lost vigour and the result was atrophy of the extremities. A partial disintegration took place and local pashas ruled as despots; even the Phanariots exercised tyrannical power with little supervision, and, as men who had sold themselves to the foreign oppressor, proved more cruel to their fellow-Greeks than the Turks themselves. The extensive coast-line of Greece left much of the mainland as well as the islands dangerously open to piratical raids. For two hundred years the most characteristic feature of the history of Greece under the Turks consists in the repeated raids of the pirates, both Turkish and Christian, and the fights to which they gave rise among the peasants and islanders. The concerns of religion seem to be swallowed up in a struggle for bare existence.

One interesting series of events breaks the monotony of this story of suffering and humiliation, namely the progress of the Venetian conquests. Venice had suffered in the general deluge that had swept over the wreck of the Byzantine Empire under the great Mohammed II. But gradually she more than recovered the ground she had lost in Eastern Europe, though never her own civic grandeur. After a ruinous war, the Venetians succeeded in conquering the Morea (A.D. 1684). But while they were thus able to restore a portion of the Ottoman Empire to Christendom, their action was creating a fresh complication in the Greek

Church. In the first place, they were Roman Catholics, with whose religious position the Greeks had no sympathy, having lively memories of the intrigues of the Jesuits and the attempts of the Uniats to capture the orthodox Church. Then the patriarch of Constantinople was a functionary under the Turkish government, and therefore officially bound to be opposed to the Venetian aggression. Nevertheless, Morosini, the able Venetian leader, contrived to establish such good order that a number of Greeks were drawn from the Turkish provinces in the north to share in the growing prosperity of the Morea. Even Mohammedans also yielded to the temptation, and some of them joined the Greek Church, without any interference on the part of the authorities.

The Venetians established the only liberal Roman Catholic government of the age. They left the Greeks free to practise their religious rites. In this respect the policy of Venice was wholly different from that of Rome and the Jesuits, by whom hitherto the Latin Church had been represented in the East. The Venetians restored to the Roman Catholics the churches which the Turks had converted into mosques; but the chief of these churches had been built by the Franks at the time of the Crusades or later. They did not permit the pope to interfere with the Greek Church, and they allowed it to retain all the powers and privileges it had possessed under the sultan. But the situation was awkward, because all the Greek bishops in the Morea were nominees of the patriarch of Constanstinople, who also appointed the abbots of many of the monasteries. The Venetians would not permit an exarch of the patriarch to live in the Morea or any patriarchal missive to be published by the clergy, and they invited the Greek communes to elect their own bishops. This can hardly be regarded as ecclesiastical tyranny; it was a political necessity, and, considering the odious position of the patriarch, a necessity not unwelcome to patriotic Greeks. The Roman Catholic priests, who of course were now free to enter the Morea, were men of higher character, better education, and more

disinterested conduct, than the local Greek clergy, and as such they won respect from the inhabitants. Altogether the Venetian occupation was followed by an improvement in the condition of the conquered province.

Gradually Morosini pushed his forces farther north and took more of the Grecian territory from the Turks. In September 1687 he entered the Piræas, occupied Athens, and besieged the Acropolis. This led to disastrous consequences involving an irreparable loss to the civilised world. The Parthenon was then standing in all the glory of perfect Greek art, the grandest product of Doric architecture, bearing in its pediment and on its entablature the masterpieces of Pheidias, the most sublime sculpture the world has ever seen. Into this centre of classic splendour crashed the Venetian shells, reducing the temple to ruins, pounding some of the sculpture to fragments, and leaving the best of it in the battered and broken condition in which we see it to-day at the British Museum, where, in spite of the ill-usage from which it has suffered, it is still recognised as one of the wonders of the world under the title of "The Elgin Marbles."[1] It is humiliating to Europe to see that the ruin of the greatest relic of art in the city, that had been the crown and flower of ancient civilisation, was directly caused by men from the most beautiful city of modern civilisation, that it was the owners of St. Mark's who shattered the Parthenon. Here we perceive the mockery of war, which flaunts flags of glory and yet is in itself a shameful heritage of brutal barbarism.

The next hundred and fifty years afford little of interest to be recorded concerning the fortunes—or rather the misfortunes—of the Greek Church under the Turkish domination. Pirates still ravaged the coasts, and pashas and Phanariots continued to oppress the inland people who were beyond the reach of the wild sea-rovers. Simony was more rampant than ever. The clerical office was systematically bought for the sake of the power it conferred and the dues it

[1] So named because sent to England by Lord Elgin (after suffering later ravages of war), and thus at last saved from total destruction.

commanded, and this evil continued in the Venetian territory of Greece also. But in the Morea under the influence of the Catholic priests education now made some progress. Thus Venice was sowing the seeds of a better future. Russia also, under the influence of Peter the Great, was stepping into the arena of European politics and preparing for her rôle as the protectress of the Oriental Churches. But the tsar was disappointed in not being joined by a general rising of the Christians when in the year 1711 he advanced to an attack of the Ottoman Empire, and he was compelled to agree to peace on humiliating terms. Thus Russia's first serious act of interference only resulted in mischief. The Porte, having discovered its power, proceeded to use it by expelling the Venetians from Greece. In 1715 the Turks seized and pillaged Corinth, making slaves of the Greeks they captured there. This led the terror-stricken Greeks of the Morea to prostrate themselves before their old enemies, and to invite them to come and drive out the Venetians. They must have seen good reason to repent of their short-sighted cowardice when they were suffering from the ravages produced by the janissaries in the process of reconquest. The reversion of Morea and other Venetian acquisitions to Turkey was confirmed by the treaty of Passarovitz, which followed the victories of Prince Eugene, and was signed on the 21st of July 1718. But Venice still retained possessions in Dalmatia and other parts.

After this, by degrees, Russia again assumed the proud position of champion of Eastern Christianity. In 1783 Catherine II. expelled the Mussulman power from the Crimea, where it had held its ground with more or less tenacity from the time of the Mongol invasion; and about the same time she extracted a treaty from the Porte granting the Greeks of the Archipelago the right to use the Russian flag.

Meanwhile the Greeks had been doing nothing for themselves. But a new day was now dawning. After more than three centuries of humiliation and oppression, once again Hellas was beginning to realise her national

existence. It has often been shown in history that revolutions do not occur when the people who revolt are suffering most severely from oppression. In those dark and dismal days the power of tyranny is too great to allow of any hope of successful resistance, and the misery of its victims simply benumbs their minds and paralyses their energies. It is with the beginning of better times that the fatal spell of despotism is broken, and daring projects of independence are engendered. Then the slumbering emotions of patriotism awake from their unnatural lethargy and the tyrant's slaves remember that they are men. Thus it was in Greece at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Already it seemed as though the Ottoman rule was on its decline, its vigour decaying, its power for mischief shrinking. There were isles of Greece that had become virtually self-governing. Even the mainland was certainly not worse treated than previously; its cruelest oppressors were not the self-indulgent Turks, but those disgraceful Greeks, nominally fellow-Christians—the Phanariots. Another influence made the goad of tyranny felt more acutely, although it was not being applied more vigorously. This was the stirring of the Greek spirit itself. Findlay points out that it began with education. Greece had been singularly behind the rest of Europe, not so much in the degree of education, as in its nature. The modern spirit, with its revival of classical antiquity, which rose in the West with the Renaissance, was not known in Eastern Europe. The East had neither Renaissance nor Reformation—those two mighty factors of the world as we know it. The vast significance of that double negation can scarcely be over-rated.

Greece was still back in the Middle Ages, or rather in the late, the decadent patristic period. Her intellectual development had been arrested with the death of John of Damascus, the last of the Fathers. Since then her education had not been neglected; for centuries it was far in advance of that of the rude and brutal West, and it was always maintained in some quarters with pedantic assiduity. But it was patristic education, ecclesiastical education,

education in the dead theology of an effete Church. All life and soul, all adventure of speculation, all passion of poetry, had long since withered out of it. And while it harked back on the past it did not go far enough in that direction to find inspiration. It cared nothing for the glories of ancient Hellas. It prided itself in Chrysostom, not in Plato. Its boast was the orthodoxy of its Church, not the art, poetry, and heroism of its ancestry. It did not look back beyond Constantinople; it never found in Athens a name to conjure with.

Then a new spirit awoke. The Greeks were roused to remember that they were the descendants and heirs of the most magnificent classical antiquity. The educational reform was commenced by Eugenios Bulgares of Corfu, who introduced it to Joannina, Mount Athos, and Constantinople. This alarmed the conservative ecclesiastics and annoyed the time-serving Phanariots, whose influence with the sultan put a check to it. But it was welcomed in Russia, whither Eugenios was invited in the year 1775, and where he was made bishop of Sclavonia and Kherson. He wrote a book on religious toleration which still more irritated the dignitaries of his Church, and called forth a reply by Anthimus the patriarch of Jerusalem. This miserable sycophant congratulated the Greeks on having escaped the artifices of the devil to which Catholics, Lutherans, and Calvinists had all succumbed, and gave his version of the rise of the Ottoman Empire as a mark of the particular favour of heaven to protect them against the Western heresy with which the last of the Byzantine emperors were infected. Eugenios was followed by Adamantius Korais, a native of Chios, who settled in Paris, and put modern Greek into a literary form. At the same time, he urged the principles of religious liberty and endeavoured to rouse his people from the intellectual torpor of orthodox bigotry. Under these influences the Greeks began to realise their nationality and to dream dreams of the revival of their great past.

Nevertheless, the early chapters of the story of the

struggle for Greek independence are grievously disappointing. The first leaders of the revolutionary committee which was working for this end, known as the *Philiké Hetairia*, were self-seeking men who deservedly lost the confidence of their followers. The movement did not make much headway till it was taken up by the peasants,[1] and then it was conducted in some places with savage ferocity. On the 5th of April, 1821, a thanksgiving service, at which twenty-four priests officiated while 5,000 fighting men gathered round, was held at Kalmata, in the open air, by the side of a rushing torrent, to celebrate the success of the Greeks in Messenia. Two days after this, Petrobey, the commander of the insurgent army, issued a proclamation in conjunction with a few primates—local Greek officials, corresponding to the Constantinople Phanariots—whom he designated the "Senate of Messenia." It was addressed to all the Christian nations, and its object was to seek their assistance in throwing off the Ottoman yoke. But the Greeks had to fight for their liberties. Dreadful scenes accompanied the popular risings which now ensued. Perhaps the worst case was that of the Morea, where the Greeks murdered the whole Mussulman population, amounting to ten or fifteen thousand peaceable men, women, and children, scattered over the peninsular, and quite helpless because overpowered by numbers. They first killed all they could lay hold of in the country parts. Some escaped to the towns. But one after another the towns were taken, and all the Turks who had sought refuge in them were also massacred. This was not a mere savage outburst; it was planned and instigated by the Hetairists. And it succeeded. The Morea was freed from the Turkish tyranny. The grim fact cannot be denied. The most damning evidence of the evil of despotism is seen in its destruction of natural human sympathies among the slaves it debases by its cruelty.

The savage method of seizing the prize of liberty had to be paid for at a heavy price. The sultan had already

[1] See Findlay, *Greek Revolution*, vol. i. p. 195.

begun to take severe measures for the suppression of the insurrection. When the news of the massacre in the Morea reached him he executed sixteen of the Hetairists in one day. Then he had a number of Greeks of the highest rank seized as hostages, under the circumstances a sensible policy; several were beheaded. On the 22nd of April the despot's vengeance reached its climax in the execution of Gregorios, the patriarch of Constantinople, now an old man, much respected by his flock, who was hung from the lintel of the gate of the patriarchate with his sentence fixed to his breast. His body was exposed for three days and then given to the mob to be dragged through the streets and flung into the sea. Recovered by the Christians, it was conveyed in an Ionian vessel to Odessa, where it was received as a holy relic by the Russians and buried with great pomp. The accusation against Gregorios was complicity in the insurrection. It would seem that he had not taken any active part in it, but that, on the other hand, he had possessed some knowledge of what was going on which he had not reported to the government. Constructively, this was treason against the Ottoman power to which he owed his appointment, so that the sultan was justified in executing him; and yet to have betrayed his fellow-Christians would have been treason to his race and his religion. It was a terrible dilemma for a good man to be in. Few can blame him for the course he chose, which was that of silence. But this was one more evidence of the monstrous anomaly of the position he held as the chief pastor of the Eastern Church and at the same time an official of the Mohammedan government. Gregorios was a man of high character, and the calm and dignified way in which he died helps us to sympathise with the view of the Greeks who honour him as a martyr.

The violent death of so venerable a personage as the old patriarch of Constantinople sent a shock of horror through Europe. The Tsar Alexander withdrew his representative from the city. This was not merely a diplomatic move, since it appears that the Russian ambassador was in

personal danger. Finally, the tsar proceeded to concentrate an army of 100,000 men on the borders of the principalities.

Meanwhile the conflagration of insurrection was spreading. When the monks of Mount Athos discovered that Russia was not going to support it they were reluctant to give it their sanction. Their predecessors had been wise in coming to terms with Mohammed II., the conqueror of Constantinople. Although for a time they favoured the Hetairists, ultimately they too came to terms, believing that the privileges of the Holy Mountain would be better protected by the Turks than by the Greek revolutionists. The situation was very complicated; because in its origin the revolution was mixed up with demands for religious liberty. The orthodox Church, under the patriarch of Constantinople and the bishops who were responsible to the Porte, was in a way an appanage of the Ottoman government. Besides, it was hide-bound in conservative officialism. On the other hand, men who had tasted the sweets of liberty thirsted for it in Church as well as in State. But no Greek Churchmen were more conservative than the monks of Mount Athos. While as Christians they were opposed to the Mussulmans, and would naturally have sided with their fellow-Christians in endeavouring to free the Church from the yoke of Islam, they had the greatest antipathy to the spirit represented by the French Revolution, the infection of which had been caught by the Greek insurgents. A modern free-thinking revolutionist was more alarming to them than a stolid, old-fashioned Turk. So they finally decided that on the whole it would be best for them to go on as they were These monks have always enjoyed large privileges of self-government, but little molested by the Turkish government. Their peculiar situation on their isolated isthmus has enabled them to live to themselves without interference from the great world beyond. But the judgment of the monks of Mount Athos was not without confirmation in other quarters. The primates and bishops discovered that

the military leaders were not at all inclined to hand the powers of government over to them, so that they actually possessed less power under their fellow-Greeks than they had exercised under the Turks. The spirit of revolution is never sympathetic with officialism, whether lay or cleric.

It does not fall within the limits of this chapter to sketch the course of the final establishment of Greek independence. If there is much that is disappointing in the issue, let it be remembered that history cannot repeat itself. The modern Greeks could assume the names of Pericles and Demosthenes; they could not conjure into life again the genius and glory of ancient Hellas. Greece was now inhabited by a mixed population. Very early, shoals of Sclavs had poured over the Balkans into the south; subsequently Albanians had come in great numbers; in some places the actual Greeks were quite outnumbered by the alien immigrants. The resultant population is only Hellenic in geography, language, and religion, not at all in purity of race. The Greeks of to-day are not the Greeks of Solon, and Pericles, and Plato. They are a mixed race; which, however, is bravely striving to revive the ancient Hellenic traditions. We may well congratulate them on the liberties they have won and the progress they are still making, without burdening them with the absurd expectation that they will emulate in the twentieth century A.D. the deeds of their predecessors of the fourth century B.C.

After Greece had established her freedom, the connection of the Church in Greece with the patriarch of Constantinople was difficult to define. At first all mutual relations were broken off. This was inevitable, since the patriarch was an accredited official under the Ottoman government. The clergy ceased to mention the patriarch's name in their prayers, and in this respect followed the example of the prayers used in those parts of the Greek Church which were outside his recognised rule. The independence of the Church in Greece was not effected without opposition. Bishops from provinces of the Turkish

Empire, encouraged by the monks of Mount Athos, came into Greece in order to support the patriarch's claim of authority; but the Greek bishops would not yield to their persuasions.

In the year 1833 a national synod decreed that the orthodox apostolic Church of Greece, while it preserves the dogmatic unity of the Eastern orthodox Churches, is dependent on no external authority and spiritually owns no head but the Founder of the Christian faith. In external government, which belongs to the crown, it acknowledges the King of Greece as its supreme head. The Holy Synod consists of prelates appointed by the king, and a royal delegate attends its meetings and countersigns its decrees, having a veto on its proceedings. Since the patriarch ignored this decision two parties now arose, one supporting it, the other siding with Constantinople. At length, after much negotiation, in the year 1850 the patriarch and synod of Constantinople published a decretal of the Oriental Church recognising the independence of the Greek Church under certain restrictions, the terms of which were adopted two years later by the Greek Parliament. According to this decision, the rights of the Greek synod in home affairs are recognised, but the patriarch can interpose in matters that affect the whole Church. In the year 1863, Prince George, a Lutheran, having become King of Greece, it was enacted that "The orthodox Church of Greece, acknowledging for its Head the Lord Jesus Christ, is indissolubly united in doctrine with the Greek Church of Constantinople and with every other Church holding the same doctrines."

The patriarch of Constantinople is the spiritual head of the whole orthodox Church, and the secular head of the Greek Church in the Turkish dominions.[1] He has jurisdiction over the whole of European Turkey, part of Bulgaria, Rumelia, Asia Minor, the Ægean Islands, and Crete. During the years 1843 to 1845 there was a great

[1] See Silbernagl, *Verfassung und gegenwärtiger Bestand sämtlicher Kirchen des Orients*, p. 9.

contest between the patriarch of Constantinople and the synods of the patriarchates of Jerusalem and Syria on the right to choose their patriarchs without reference to Constantinople, and the latter gained their point.[1] But the orthodox patriarch of Alexandria is still subject to the patriarch of Constantinople. He, however, is a merely titular official with but a shadow of a diocese, since the Copts of the national Church in Egypt are Monophysites, separated from the Greek Church. There are about 37,000 orthodox Greek Christians in Egypt, 28,000 under the patriarch of Antioch, 15,000 subject to the patriarch of Jerusalem.[2]

Melancholy as the story of the Greek Church during the later centuries of its history may be, it is cheering to observe signs of awakening life during quite recent years. These are to be traced in two directions.

In the first place there is a remarkable development of scholarship among the higher ecclesiastics. Learning was never allowed to die out in the leading monastic centres; but hitherto this has been patristic learning without the least recognition of critical scholarship. Now the criticism of the West is breaking into the mind of the East. Students from the Greek Church are now to be found in German universities. The result is that the studies of Berlin, and Heidelburg, and Strasburg are being transplanted to Constantinople and Athens. Already these studies have borne fruit, and the Greek Church is coming forward with its contributions to historical theology.

The other movement is of a more popular character. It consists of the formation of societies for Biblical study.[3] These societies are quite unecclesiastical in form and are chiefly maintained by laymen. At first they were frowned upon by the clergy. But their good effects in reformation of character are winning them recognition as truly Christian brotherhoods, that men who have the spiritual and moral

[1] See Silbernagl, *Verfassung und gegenwärtiger Bestand sämtlicher Kirchen des Orients*, p. 24.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 26.

[3] Called σύλλογοι, or *vercins*.

welfare of the people at heart should welcome gladly. Unlike similar movements in Russia, which are almost confined to dissenters in formal separation from the national Church, these societies do not involve any such severance. We may compare them to the Bible readings of evangelical members of the Church of England, such as those that are fed by the fervour of Keswick. But they are more closely organised, and cannot but be recognised as indicating some return to the primitive idea of the Church.

The movement is spreading rapidly. At Constantinople there are more than ten of these brotherhoods. In Smyrna quite a new religious life is blossoming out among the associations. They have appeared at Ephesus, at Heleopolis, at Arreon. In some places the brotherhood has led to two preachings on the Sunday, one early in the morning actually in the church, the other in the club-house (*Vereinhause*) later in the day; for this second preaching, however, sometimes there is substituted a catechising of men, women, and children. In Athens there are two brotherhoods. One has been formed at Patros in Cyprus. Meanwhile the need of schools for the clergy is being pressed, and already there is preaching by the parish popes in some places and no longer only by visiting priests and bishops.

As early as the year 1818 a Greek society for the circulation of the Scriptures was formed with the approval of the patriarch Cyril VI., and in conjunction with the British and Foreign Bible Society. Nevertheless, the excitement which arose in the year 1901 on the translation of the Bible into the vernacular would appear to indicate a reactionary movement on the part of the obscurantists. But the case is very complicated. In the first place there is a strong clerical aversion to a translation promoted by laymen without any ecclesiastical sanction. Then the new passion for classicism is irritated by a seeming degradation of Scripture. It is said that no Greek *vulgate* is needed, as the children are now taught to read classical Greek in the schools. Behind all this there is the inveterate

horror of innovations in the Greek Church, together with the superstition of the ignorant population in clinging to the old venerated form of the Bible.

Whether the brotherhoods will be able to remain in connection with the ancient Greek Church, whether they are the little leaven that is to leaven the whole lump—a consummation to be devoutly desired, or whether the garment of antiquity, stiffened with its threefold embroidery — doctrinal, ceremonial, disciplinary, will prove too inflexible to allow it breath and life, the future will declare. In the latter case we may see a Greek Protestantism breaking away from the old orthodox Church. But if that result can be avoided without stifling the new movement, we may hope that the old dream of More and Erasmus in the West may come true in our own day in the East, and an ancient Church be revived and reformed from within. With the sad history of that Church before us it is difficult to be sanguine of such a result. We cry with the sceptical prophet, "Can these dry bones live?" But at all events the new movement deserves warm encouragement from earnest Christian people, that the light thus kindled may not be quenched and the great Church of the East sink down again into dim torpor.

CHAPTER III

THE OUTLYING BRANCHES OF THE GREEK CHURCH

Hackett, *History of the Orthodox Church of Cyprus*, 1901; Malan, *History of the Georgian Church*, 1866; Jirecek, *Geschichte der Bulgaren*, 1876, and *Das Fürstenthum Bulgarien*, 1891; Miller, *The Balkans*, 1898; *La Macedoine*, 1900; von Mach, *The Bulgarian Exarchate*, 1907; Mijatovich, *History of Modern Servia*, 1872; Comte A. de Gubernatis, *La Servie et les Serbes*, 1898; Silbernagl, *Verfassung und gegenwärtiger Bestand sämtlicher Kirchen des Orients*, 1904.

THE independence of the Church in Greece is not without precedents. One of the most interesting is afforded by the Church of Cyprus, the history of which is exhaustively described in Mr. Hackett's learned work.[1] That Church, which was founded by Paul and Barnabas, claimed to be independent of patriarchal interference on the ground of its apostolical origin and its ancient usage. Nevertheless, the patriarch of Antioch endeavoured to bring it into subjection to his authority; and therefore it sent an appeal to the council of Ephesus on the question (A.D. 430), which resulted in a decision in favour of the independence of Cyprus. It was decreed that, "if it be not in accordance with ancient custom for the bishop of Antioch to hold consecrations in Cyprus, as the most religious men who are in attendance at this holy council have assured us in their memorials and orally, the presidents of the holy churches which are in Cyprus shall enjoy, freed from molestation and hindrance, the right of performing for themselves the

[1] *A History of the Orthodox Church of Cyprus.*

consecrations of the most holy bishops according to the canons of the holy Fathers and ancient custom" (Canon viii.). The caution of the council in making this decision conditional is very remarkable. But no patriarch of Antioch in later times was able to produce evidence rebutting the statement of the Cypriolites concerning the "ancient custom."

In the reign of Zeno (A.D. 474–491), Peter the Fuller, then patriarch of Antioch, revived the claim to authority over Cyprus, and the emperor favoured his cause, till the alleged appearance of St. Barnabas in a vision, leading to the discovery of his bones in a chest under a carob tree, silenced all opposition. Nevertheless, a certain connection with Antioch was preserved, Cyprus receiving the holy chrism from the patriarch of that city, but of necessity in those later times when only patriarchs could consecrate it. Therefore they were misled who took this fact as a sign of general subjection. Subsequently Cyprus became famous as the see of the Church writer Epiphanius. In the year 647 the island was conquered by the Arabs, the chief city Constantia destroyed, the metropolitan church profaned, and many of the citizens massacred. So cruel was the Mussulman oppression that a great number of the inhabitants, led by their archbishop John, left Cyprus and settled in the province of the Hellespont at the invitation of the emperor, Justinian II. There they preserved their ecclesiastical independence, as an orthodox Church, now within the confines of the patriarchate of Constantinople, but no more under its jurisdiction than they had been previously under that of Antioch. The migration of these "pilgrim fathers" was not a success. They were not destined to anticipate the story of the *Mayflower* and the founders of New England. Many perished on the journey. The remnant who landed did not stay long; they soon returned to Cyprus, where they lived on as best they could under the Mohammedan rule, but still as a distinctly organised Church.

Under Constantine Copronymus Cyprus was temporarily

freed from the grasp of Islam (A.D. 743). But it was recaptured early in the ninth century by the famous Harun-al-Rashid. Yet even subsequent to this misfortune it enjoyed a measure of liberty, so that it was used as an asylum by fugitives from Moslem oppression in Palestine and Syria. After undergoing various vicissitudes of fortune Cyprus was finally wrested from the Arabs by the emperor, Nicephorus Phocas (A.D. 963–969). It now remained under the Byzantine rule till it was taken possession of by the English king, Richard I., and then used for some time as a strategical centre from which the Crusaders could invade Syria. Richard sold the island to the Templars, who in turn gave place to the Knights of St. John.

After the scandalous capture of Constantinople by the Franks, like the rest of the Greek Church, Cyprus was annoyed by the impertinent pretensions of Western prelates. At a meeting of the Latin clergy now domiciled in Cyprus, it was decreed among other things that no Greek should be ordained as a priest or admitted into a monastery without the consent of his feudal superior, who of course was a Latin. The orthodox clergy were required to swear fealty to the Latins. They appealed against this exaction to the Greek patriarch of Constantinople—now residing at Nicæa—and he forbade them to yield. The result was much distress and confusion for the Greeks in Cyprus, which led them at last to petition for definite union with the patriarchate of Constantinople, a proposal to which many difficulties were raised owing to the alleged contamination of their Church with Western usages (A.D. 1405–1412). The monk Bryennios, who had been commissioned to enquire into the situation, argued strongly against the union, declaring that for his own part he would rather suffer a thousand deaths than see the orthodox Church united to the Cypriolite. Thus this unhappy Church, which in the old days had fought for her independence of Antioch, was now forced to remain apart when she sought union with Constantinople. The Venetian occupation made no difference to the strained ecclesiastical

situation. Cyprus was still submitting against her will to papal intrusion on the one hand, and yet repudiated on the other hand by the Eastern Church because of that intrusion.

In the year 1570 the island was captured by the Turks, an event which was not altogether evil, since it put an end to the tyranny that the Roman Catholic Church had exercised over the Greek Christians for four centuries. At first the Ottoman rule was mild; the Cypriolites were allowed the free use of their churches, the right to ransom their monasteries, permission to acquire property, and the supremacy of the orthodox over all other Christian bodies in the island. No indulgence was shown to the Latins. The Greek bishops were constituted guardians of the Christian community, and in process of time the influence of the archbishop overshadowed that of the Turkish governor. But he had continual trouble with Turkish rapacity and misgovernment. We cannot follow out the weary story. The last scene of cruelty is the worst. It occurred early in the nineteenth century. Archbishop Cyprianos had exerted himself in promoting education and improving the condition of his flock. When the Greek war of independence broke out, Cyprianos and his clergy were accused to the Porte of complicity in the rebellion. On the 9th of July in the year 1821 the archbishop and three metropolitans were saddled like horses in front of the governor's palace; bits were roughly forced into their mouths, breaking their teeth; they were driven along with spurs, and finally hanged on trees. Nearly all the Christians of eminence were also massacred. One account gives 470 as the number of the victims. At length deliverance came. In the year 1872 Cyprus passed into the hands of the British government. Since then the Greek Church in the island has been entirely free. There is an English missionary church; but of course this has no official status, and unlike the old Latin Church it has neither power nor desire to interfere with the ancient orthodox Church of Cyprus.

The Church of Georgia is another branch of the Greek Church, which long enjoyed a virtually independent organisation. The Georgians appear to be the most ancient race inhabiting the Caucasus, having no affinity either with the Aryan or with the Turanian families. They are famous for having preserved a line of kings for two thousand years, reigning sometimes independently and at other times under the suzerainty of Persia, of the Eastern Empire, and of Turkey. A similar individuality is to be seen in their Church, although it has always been considered as part of the great orthodox Church of the East. Claiming a fabulous origin under the patronage of the Virgin Mary and through the preaching of St. Andrew, it has been traced back to the third century, under the influence of a woman named Nonna, or Nina, a poor captive who is said to have converted the king, Miriam (A.D. 265–318). In the next century, under Constantine, Greek missionaries effectually Christianised the little isolated mountain kingdom; and from that time to this it has preserved its fidelity to the faith in spite of harsh persecution, first from the Persians, then from the Mohammedans.[1] Miriam's son and successor, Bakar, is said to have been a zealous Christian who caused the gospel to be preached among his people, and had churches built in various places over the land. One of the most famous, the cathedral of Khoni, is ascribed to the next king—Muridat III. The Georgians—or Iberians as they were also called, had bishops consecrated at Constantinople, and were reckoned in the patriarchate of Antioch. But their remoteness and national and racial distinctness led to their Church history running its own course, apart from that of the main body of the orthodox community. At the end of the fourth century, Bishop Abda having set fire to a Persian temple and refusing to rebuild it, the

[1] The claim put forth for St. George as a missionary and patron saint of Georgia is due to ignorance of the origin of the kingdom's name and wholly without foundation. "Georgia" is derived from the Persian *Gurj*. So we have Gurjistan = Gurgland = Georgia.

country was invaded by the Persians. Near about the same time it was ravaged by the Roman forces and as a result its church broken off from connection with the Greeks. Muridat IV. came under the glamour of Julian's strange religion, which had so little fascination for that emperor's own subjects; but his son, Archil (413–446), carried on an active campaign against heathenism and heresy. The New Testament appears to have been translated into Georgian during the fifth and sixth centuries.[1] About the same time Archbishop Mobidakh, a Persian by birth, introduced Arianism into Georgia and endeavoured to force it on the Church. He was deposed by a synod under the influence of Bishop Michael and the queen, Sandukhta, an earnest Christian woman who had built a church at Mtykhetha in honour of the proto-martyr, St. Stephen. Subsequently Zoroastrianism made some progress in Georgia; on the other hand, the conversion of one of the Magi named Rajden to the Christian faith, and his martyrdom among his own people by being nailed to a cross and there torn to pieces, had a counter influence. The Church of Georgia was now organised under its chief bishop, who bore the title of Catholicos of Mtykhetha and of Iberia. He does not appear to have been responsible to any of the four patriarchs after the year 556, when P'harsman III. separated the country from the Byzantine authority. During the reign of the same king a great impulse was given to Christianity in Georgia by the arrival of thirteen preachers from Syria. An air of mystery surrounds them. They are said to have reached Mtykhetha by crossing a river dry shod. Their advent and influence suggests the coming of the friars to England. The real miracle was the spiritual awakening that accompanied their mission. Their reputed burial-places are marked by churches still standing.

The story of the Georgian Church is a record of repeated persecutions. After the successive Persian persecutions under the Magi came the Mohammedan flood of

[1] See Scrivener, *Introduction*, 4th edit. vol. ii. pp. 156–158.

conquest and its consequent sufferings for the Christians. In the ninth century the district of Ap'hkhazia, which stood politically separate from Georgia under its own king, also had its own catholicos, so that the Georgian Church now consisted of two mutually independent provinces. In the same century an Iberian convent was founded at Mount Athos It still exists and is now the third in importance among the monasteries of the Holy Mountain. David III., known as "the Reformer," coming to the throne in the year 1089, called together a synod which purged the Church of the Monophysite and other heresies. He showed himself a strong ruler both as regards Church and State. Now came the most flourishing days of Georgia—during the eleventh and twelfth centuries—when Georgians of some eminence in science and literature did their work. Among them were Arsenius, theologian, physician, metaphysician, and poet, called from the caves of Shiomgiusk to be court chaplain; Ephrem, his schoolfellow; George, the founder of the school at Tiphlis and translator of Scripture; Theophilus, the "creator of hymnology" in Georgia; John Taitcha, whose writings are said to be preserved at Mount Athos; and Demetrius the Solitary of Garedj. The reign of Queen Tamar in the second half of the twelfth century has been reckoned the golden age of Georgian literature, both ecclesiastical and civil. Then followed a time of overwhelming calamities during the devastating invasion of the Mongols under Genghis Khan, when Christians of all classes and ages were burnt alive in the churches, and pyramids of human heads marked the progress of his soldiers. Mtykhetha was reduced to a heap of ruins, its cathedral, said to have been a most beautiful building, sharing in the general destruction, and all the inhabitants remaining in the city killed. The number of deaths attributed to this pest of humanity in Georgia alone was estimated at 300,000.

Genghis Khan left the bleeding country disorganised and in hopeless confusion. She had scarcely begun to recover before the Turks commenced their incursions.

Almost in despair, the queen, Rusudana, appealed for help to the pope, Gregory IX. (A.D. 1239). She received in response a mission of seven monks sent to convert her country to the papacy! In the year 1400 came Timour, with his sweeping deluge of ruin. Throughout all these troubles Georgia remained true to the faith and added continually to her glory of martyrdom. Alexander I. (A.D. 1414–1442) rebuilt the cathedral of Mtykhetha, a structure which is in existence to-day. A little later serious attempts were made by the papacy to bring Georgia into the Roman Church, but without any result. The fall of Constantinople left the Georgians at the mercy of the Mohammedans and without a friend. The bishops were silenced, the schools closed, the people harried by the Moslem Persians. At length this much persecuted nation turned to Russia for protection. In the first instance that course did not bring much relief. During the seventeenth century a succession of apostates from the Church ruled Georgia as Mohammedans. But in the year 1701, Wakhtang VI., a Christian, came to the throne; he enacted a series of laws on Christian lines, known as the "Code of King Wakhtang." Now followed a period of temporary prosperity. But the next sovereign was a Mohammedan, and after his reign Georgia suffered again and again from alternate Persian and Turkish tyrannies, in the midst of which troubles the Church was seriously disturbed by a mission of Capuchin monks and by other efforts to induce it to enter the Roman communion. For a time the current seemed to be setting in that direction, no doubt in despair of deliverance from intolerable oppression, except by help in the West. But ultimately Oriental orthodoxy triumphed.

In the year 1783, Georgia came under the protection of Russia, and the Church of Georgia was then united to the Russian Church. In the year 1800 the country became an integral part of the Russian Empire. Eleven years later the office of catholicos was abolished and the metropolitan then entitled "Member of the Synod and

Exarch of Georgia." He is now known as "Exarch of Karthalinia and Kakheth."

The Church of Montenegro may be mentioned as from the first a virtually independent body in the orthodox communion. This little mountain State has the unique glory among its neighbours of never having been conquered by the Turks. Formerly its Vladika, or prince bishop, if not already ordained was required to obtain ordination from the orthodox metropolitan of Carlowitz. In the nineteenth century the ordination was transferred to the metropolitan of Russia. On the death of the Vladika Peter II. (A.D. 1851) the offices of prince and bishop were separated.

It remains for us to note those limbs of the Greek Church which have been more recently severed from the parent stock on national grounds, although retaining their doctrinal orthodoxy.

One of the most important branches of the orthodox Church now independent of the patriarchate of Constantinople and organised as a separate national church is the Church of Bulgaria. Here a racial distinction lies at the root of the severance from the Greek authority. The Bulgarians are a Turanian race, akin to the Finns and the Tartars, who first appeared on the banks of the Pruth in the latter part of the seventh century. From the time of the conversion of Boris in the ninth century they have been a Christian people and part of the holy orthodox Church. They have an ancient literature dating back to the age of the founders and early organisers of their Church, Cyril and Methodius, which consists for the most part of translations of Greek theological works. Bulgaria became a centre of the activity of the Bogomiles, and therefore a scene first of religious revival and then of its too common sequel—persecution. Conquered by the Turks in the fifteenth century, Bulgaria long suffered from the withering blight of the Ottoman tyranny in common with the other

Oriental Churches. She was even in a worse plight than her neighbours. The misgovernment of the Phanariots and the despotism of the bishops who owed allegiance to the patriarch of Constantinople as a minister of the sultan were hard enough to be borne in Greece; but there the people had at least to deal with their fellow-countrymen. In Bulgaria the oppression was in the hands of an alien priesthood. The patriarch of Constantinople appointed Greek bishops, and they in turn Greek parish popes. The state of affairs may be compared to that of the Anglican Church in Ireland and Wales until recent times. But it was really ten times worse; for this alien priesthood was in the employ of the cruel, unjust, Mohammedan government of the Ottoman Empire. Thus the Bulgarians suffered from a double grievance—the intrusion of foreign Church leaders, and these men acting as servants of the Turkish tyranny under which they groaned—a Greek ministry serving the Turks.

At length patriotic or rather racial feelings began to stir in the breasts of the long-enduring Bulgarians. The revival sprang from a literary awakening, which was first seen in the work of Paisii, a Bulgarian monk of Mount Athos, who published a history of his people and their saints.[1] This was followed by the autobiography of Bishop Sofronii,[2] written in a modified Sclavonic dialect. Bulgarian schools were now established. That provoked the Greek clergy to establish schools of their own, and to attempt the suppression of Sclavonic literature in favour of the Greek. But the national movement spread. The Bulgarians addressed an appeal for support to the pope, and for a time some progress was made in connecting their Church with the Uniats. But this never went far, and it soon died out. The people's aspiration was for an independent Bulgarian Church. There were repeated attempts at insurrection; but they all failed. It was the Greek ecclesiastical tyranny, rather than the Turkish

[1] *Istoria Slaveno Bolgarska.*

[2] *Life and Sufferings of the Sinful Sofronii.*

political despotism, against which the movement was agitating. The sublime Porte was astute enough to take advantage of this fact. It had no compunction in throwing over its own subservient slaves if by so doing it could divide and weaken the Christian element in the empire. On the 11th of March, 1870, the Turkish government issued a firman granting the Bulgarians a right to possess their own exarchate independent of the patriarch of Constantinople. He was to have jurisdiction over fifteen dioceses, and others were to be added if two-thirds of the population desired it. The patriarch strenuously opposed this measure, and delayed the execution of it for two years. In the year 1872 the first exarch was appointed; and the patriarch immediately excommunicated him. On the 23rd of April of that year the exarch, supported by three bishops, all lying under the ban of the patriarch, celebrated the communion in the Bulgarian church at the Phanar; on the 11th of May the Bulgarian Church was declared independent; and on the 16th of September the patriarch of Constantinople formally cut off all followers of the exarchate as schismatics.[1]

The issue proved that the Turks had miscalculated their policy. The Christian cause was not weakened by the ecclesiastical severance of Bulgaria; on the contrary, it proved to be strengthened thereby. Schools spread; education advanced; the revival of Christianity, so long dormant and inoperative, but now quick and active, roused a spirit of energy and independence. The Porte was alarmed, and it showed its terror in the usual way by indulging in massacre. Then came the infamous "Bulgarian Atrocities," in which 15,000 persons were killed in the district of Philippopolis alone, while murders and outrages on men, women, and children went on in many other places. Mr. Gladstone roused the indignation of England and compelled the English government to end its shameful protection of Turkey. First Servia, next Russia invaded the Turkish Empire, the latter being completely

[1] von Mack, *The Bulgarian Exarchate*, p. 18.

victorious after an arduous struggle. In the year 1878 the treaty of San Stephano granted independence to Bulgaria; but under the influence of Lord Beaconsfield this was modified in the treaty of Berlin, held a few months later, when Bulgaria was divided into three parts, one of which was handed back to Turkey with pledges of protection of the Christians by the European powers—pledges which have never been effectually fulfilled. The Bulgarian exarch now resides at Constantinople.[1]

Macedonia is closely associated with Bulgaria. It contains a mixed population of Greeks, Vlachs who represent the aboriginal Thracians, Albanians—the old Illyrians, Sclavs, Turks, and Bulgarians. Still included within the Turkish Empire, the Macedonian Christians are subject to the patriarch of Constantinople. But they were profoundly affected by the Bulgarian revival, which resulted in the establishment of bishoprics under the exarch of Bulgaria. Thus Macedonia shows a divided ecclesiastical allegiance. In the year 1886 a priest named Margaritis founded a gymnasium at Monastir on modern principles of education. This was done with the approval of the Porte and the sympathy of the French Roman Catholic missionaries, and with some signs of Austrian sympathy also. The tendency of such a movement was directly contrary to the obscurantism of the patriarch's policy. But it provoked an educational rivalry on the Greek side, and the Greeks under the patriarch also commenced to establish schools.

Servia, of which the original inhabitants were Thracians or Illyrians, was known to the Romans as *Mœsia Superior*, and incorporated by them in the province of Illyricum. It was won to Christianity under missionaries sent by the Byzantine emperor, Basil II., and thus it became an integral part of the orthodox Church. But in the year 1043 Stephen Bogislav drove out the imperial governors, and seven years later his son Michael established the complete independence of the country, with himself as king, secur-

[1] Silbernagl, p. 89.

ing recognition of his sovereignty from the great pope, Gregory VII. Hildebrand was always ready to seize on a political opportunity of extending the influence of the papacy on the borders of the Eastern Church. We have here one illustration among many of the interaction of State and Church in the mutual relations of the Eastern and Western Churches. A people seeking independence and out of sympathy with the government at Constantinople would turn to Rome for aid, and would meet with a ready support, because the popes were on the watch for opportunities to slip into a province of the Greek Church as the protectors of some oppressed race. In this way the bad government of the imperial authorities at Constantinople led to the alienation of outlying branches of the patriarchate. But Servia did not go over to the Latin Church. It now became an independent branch of the Greek Church, holding anomalous, undefined relations with the main body of that Church, its essential union with which, as in other and similar cases, was guaranteed by its orthodoxy. One hundred years of struggle and two hundred years of power and prosperity were followed by the ruin of Servia and the death of her king, Lazar, at the battle of Kossovopolje in the year 1389, when the country was made tributary to the Turks. Its total subjugation was only a matter of time, and this was completed in the year 1462 by the victorious Mohammed II., when it became a Turkish vilayet ruled by pashas. Servia was now not only groaning under the tyrannical rule of the Ottoman government; she was long to be the battle-ground in the wars between Turkey and Hungary. After Prince Eugene's victories a portion of the country was made over to Austria by the treaty of Passarowitz (A.D. 1718); but twenty-one years later it was recovered by Turkey. At length, in the year 1804, Servia attained its liberty in consequence of an insurrection headed by the swineherd, Kara Gyorgyé (*i.e.* "Black George"). The troubles which overwhelmed Europe during the Napoleonic wars furnished the Turks with an opportunity to recover some of their lost ground, and they again

took possession of Servia. This advance of Turkey westward was one of the dangers attending those wars that has not been sufficiently appreciated. In Servia the work of liberation had to be done over again. On Palm Sunday in the year 1815 the Serbs rose and struck for liberty a second time, their leader being Milosh Obrenovich. After a contest of five years the sultan was compelled to grant autonomy. Servia is now an independent kingdom. It will be well understood that under these circumstances she does not own any allegiance to the patriarch of Constantinople. In point of fact, the Greek Church in Servia is entirely self-governing. It is organised under a synod of bishops presided over by the archbishop of Belgrade, who is the metropolitan of Servia; and it is divided into five dioceses. There are forty-eight monasteries of the Oriental Church in the country.

The Greek Church in Bosnia and Herzegovina is still further removed from the interference of Turkey or the Constantinople authorities, since these provinces are now under Austrian rule. About one-half of the population is of the orthodox Church, the other half being equally divided between Roman Catholics and Mohammedans, except that there are some Jews. The orthodox Church—while at one with the Greeks in doctrine—is entirely self-governing, under four metropolitans.

A survey of the situation thus produced affords a striking illustration of the essential difference between the Eastern and the Western Churches. No such detached, independent churches as we see here belonging to the orthodox communion would be possible under the papacy.[1] Rome is most fearful of schism, Constantinople of heresy. Rome will have no dealings with a church that is not obedient to the pope; Constantinople will send its chrism to a church that does not own allegiance to its patriarch, so long as that church is strictly orthodox. Individual

[1] Although the popes allow the Oriental Uniats to use their own liturgies and to follow many peculiar local customs, this is all in submission to the papacy.

patriarchs have excommunicated insubordinate bishops—as in the case of the Bulgarian exarch. That is only natural; for even patriarchs are men. But the Church as a whole admits the Christianity of all the orthodox in its several branches, and the transmission of the holy oil—a thing impossible in the West—is a pleasing sign of this admission. That is so in spite of many racial quarrels and partisan differences, which after all only lie on the surface and do not break the bonds of the deep-seated union of the holy orthodox Church.

DIVISION III

THE RUSSIAN CHURCH

CHAPTER I

THE ORIGIN OF CHRISTIANITY IN RUSSIA

(*a*) Nestor, and later Chroniclers; French translations by L. Leger, 1884.

(*b*) Mouravieff, *Hist. of the Russian Church*, English trans., 1842; Ralston, *Early Russian History*, 1874; Morfill, *Russia* ("Story of the Nations"), 4th edit., 1890; Histories in Russian Language: Karamzin, Ustrialov, Sergius Soloviev, Bestryhev-Riumin, etc.

AFTER the fall of Constantinople in the year 1453 the centre of gravity of Oriental Christianity gradually moves northwards. The process is slow, at first imperceptible, occupying one or two centuries, and only to be recognised as continuous and ultimate by after reflection. Nevertheless it is now the chief outstanding fact in the history of the Eastern Churches. The Sclav supersedes the Greek as the dominant race in Eastern Christendom; Moscow takes the primacy so long held by Constantinople; Russia becomes the most important part of the holy orthodox Church and the protector of the Christians in the Ottoman Empire.

"The conversion of Russia by the Greek Church," says Mr. Hore, "is the mightiest conquest the Christian Church has ever made since the time of the apostles."[1] When we recollect what the conversion of the Teutonic races has

[1] *Eighteen Centuries of the Orthodox Greek Church*, p. 7.

meant to Europe and America and the world generally, we may hesitate to accept this unqualified assertion. But if we confine our attention to the East, it is safe to admit it as true within that area.

The vast area of Europe now known as Russia is peopled mainly by a Sclavonic race belonging to the Indo-Germanic, or Aryan, stock, but with a considerable admixture of Finnish and Scandinavian elements from the north-west, and Mongolians from the east. Most of the names that occur in the early legendary history are of a Scandinavian type. The very name Russia, formerly traced to the Rhoxolani who prove to be an Iranian people, is now generally identified with the Finnish Ruotsi, the name given by the Finns to the Swedes, and is supposed to be a corruption of part of a word meaning "rowers"[1]—representing seafaring men, Vikings of the north, therefore people who had drifted far from the scenes of their ancestry.

Russia was late in coming into contact with civilisation. The name "Scythian" was vaguely used by the Greeks for the people north of the Euxine, but little was known of them. The Russian records begin with the chronicle attributed to Nestor, a monk born about A.D. 1056, who lived at Kiev and died about A.D. 1114, so that his time coincides with the beginning of the Norman period in England and the conquest of the Seljuk Turks in Armenia. He is regarded as the Livy or Herodotus of Russia, the father of its history, the writer who collects the legends of antiquity and brings the story down to the period of authentic history; but more is attributed to this celebrated monk than is now allowed to be his own work. Still Nestor is the first of the chroniclers. Here, then, we are more than a thousand years after the time of Christ before we come upon any record of Russian history.[2]

[1] *Rothsmenn* or *Rothskarlar*.

[2] The earliest date that can be assigned to the first redaction of the so-called "Chronicle of Nestor" is A.D. 1000; but in its present form it cannot be earlier than A.D. 1377, the date of the oldest MS., which was written by a monk named Laurentius in Suzdalj. The questions of the

Nevertheless the Russian Church claims an apostolic origin. Did not Eusebius say that "Andrew received Scythia"?[1] Out of this vague statement has grown the tradition that the apostle founded the Church at Kiev, planting the cross on the spot where the cathedral now stands. Nestor's traditional history of Christianity in Russia only carries this back to the end of the ninth century, where we may see the actual beginning of the Russian Church.

According to tradition, the first Russians to embrace Christianity were two princes of Kiev, Oskold and Dir, who invaded the Byzantine Empire in the year 866, and even succeeded in bringing up their warships under the very walls of Constantinople, when the patriarch Photius raised a storm which wrecked the vessels, by plunging the virginal robe of the mother of God into the sea, a miracle which resulted in the conversion of the pirates.[2] The hymn of victory which concludes the office for the first hour in the daily matins of the Greek Church is said to celebrate this triumph. It is addressed to the Virgin Mary as a victorious general.[3] The two converts are said to have carried the Christian faith back with them to Russia, and to have spread it in their dominions. According to Constantine Porphyrogenitus, who is followed by other Greek analysts, a missionary bishop was sent to the Russians by the emperor Basil the Macedonian (A.D. 867–886) and the patriarch Ignatius, and made many converts among them. Then among the Sees subject to the patriarch of Constantinople in Codinus's catalogue the metropolitan See of Russia appears as early as the year 891. Further, as in the case of the Goths, Sclavs serving in the imperial army adopted the

origin, sources, and dates of Nestor's chronicle are critically discussed in *Die Entstehung Der Ältesten Russischen Sogenannten Nestorchronik*, by Dr. Stjepan Sakulj, 1896.

[1] *Hist. Eccl.* iii. 1. [2] Nestor, i.

[3] The following are the words of this curious hymn, or rather anthem: Τῇ ὑπερμάχῳ στρατήγῳ τὰ νικητήρια, ὡς λυτρωθέντες τῶν δεινῶν, εὐχαριστήρια ἀναγράφομεν οἱ δοῦλοι σου Θεοκόκε, Ἀλλ' ὡς ἔχουσα τὸ κράτος ἀπροσμάχητον, ἐκ παντοίων ἡμᾶς κινδύνων ἐλευθέρωσον ἵνα κράζωμέν σοι χαῖρε νύμφη ἀνύμφευτε, Δόξα, καὶ νῦν.

religion of the empire. About the year 870, or a little earlier, two Greek brothers, Cyril and Methodius, carried on successful missionary work among the Sclavonic tribes of the Danube in and near Moravia, and translated the Bible, or at least part of the New Testament, into the Sclavonic language, for which, like Ulfilas with his Gothic version, they had to construct an alphabet. This was subsequently brought into Russia, where it helped to further the spread of Christianity.[1] Thus it would seem that in various ways Christianity was penetrating into Russia during the ninth century, although little credence may be given to the legends, with their accompanying marvels, which offer to describe the process.

We come upon firmer ground when we reach the traditions contained in the chronicle of Nestor concerning the introduction of Christianity into Russia by the Princess Olga and her son Vladimir. Rurik, a Norseman who had first settled at Novgorod, one of the oldest towns in Russia, followed the course of common migration among his people, and travelled in a south-easterly direction till he reached Kiev, where he established himself and founded the State which subsequently expanded into the Russian Empire.[2] Dying in the year 879, Rurik entrusted his son Igor to a chieftain named Oleg, who found him a wife in the person of Olga. This Princess Olga was the real founder of Russian Christianity. After the death of her husband she ruled his State during the minority of her son Sviatoslaff. If we are to accept the story preserved by Nestor we must see that Christianity was not then unknown at Kiev, because it tells how the princess went to Constantinople for the express purpose of learning about the true God; there she

[1] Since the fourteenth century this version has undergone many revisions, apparently with the object of modernising it. The oldest MS. of the whole Bible is dated A.D. 1499. There are many MSS. of the New Testament of widely different recensions, some few as old as the eleventh, or even the tenth, century, among which is an Evangelistarium dated 1056. See Scrivener, *Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament*, 4th edit., vol. ii. pp. 158–161.

[2] Nestor, ii.

was baptised by the patriarch Polyeuctes, having the emperor, Constantine Porphyrogenitus, for her godfather. Olga became famous both for her wisdom and for her saintliness. "She was the forerunner of Christianity in Russia," says Nestor, "as the morning star is the precursor of the sun and the dawn the precursor of the day. As the moon shines at midnight, she shone in the midst of a pagan people. She was like a pearl amid dirt, for the people were in the mire of their sins and not yet purified by baptism. She purified herself in a holy bath, and removed the garb of sin of the old man Adam." [1]

Olga's fierce, warlike son Sviatoslaff never submitted to the yoke of Christ; but he so far yielded to his mother's influence as to allow the open profession of Christianity among his people. In fact, very little persecution attended the introduction of the gospel into Russia, which in this respect was a noble exception to the usual experience among pagan nations. The chronicle only mentions two Christian martyrs during this period of the early evangelising of Russia, Theodore and John, who were put to death by the rage of the people because one of them refused to give up his son as a sacrifice to Perun, the Sclavonic god of thunder.

Sviatoslaff was killed in an ambush laid by the Pechenegs, a Mongolian tribe who had invaded Russia, and his skull was made into a drinking-cup. Thus perished the last pagan prince of the small territory out of which was destined to grow the vast empire of Russia. He had foolishly divided his dominion between his three sons, whose quarrels soon left only Vladimir, the third son, to whom his father had bequeathed Novgorod. This prince proved to be a strong man, who not only seized all the territory that had been assigned to his brothers, but added Galicia or "Red Russia." His name is of great importance in Church history, because he proved to be the Constantine of the Russian Empire. He not only adopted Christianity for himself, but he made it the State religion. Thus almost

[1] Nestor, vi.

from the beginning the Church in Russia was a State Church.

The traditional story of the conversion of Vladimir preserved by the chronicler[1] has the picturesque character of an early legend. We must give the first place to the influence of his grandmother, the capable and saintly Olga. Although she had brought him up in the truth of Christ, like Augustine, who had been privileged with the incomparable training of his mother Monica, Vladimir drifted away from the early influence when he attained to manhood and the absorbing interests of ambition. Still, as we follow the tradition, which has nothing improbable in this respect, we learn that he was not satisfied with the religion of his fathers. It represents how one after the other various parties press their religion upon him. First come the Mohammedans of Bulgaria, whose regulations he does not choose to comply with; next the Jews, boasting of the ancient glory of Jerusalem. "But where is your country?" asks the prince. "It was ruined by the wrath of God for the sins of our fathers," they answer. Vladimir will not accept the religion of a people whom their God has abandoned. Then come theologians from Germany with the Roman religion; but this is rejected as different from the religion of Constantinople in which Olga instructed her grandson. A philosopher of the Greek faith, the monk Constantine, has a better reception as he exposes the defects of other religions and eloquently expounds the Christian faith, and he is sent away loaded with presents. The story goes on to describe the extraordinarily cautious methods further employed by Vladimir in the choice of a religion. He discusses the question with his council, which decides to send commissioners, consisting of boyars—nobles of the highest rank—to make their observations of each religion on the spot. The authorities at Constantinople see their opportunity. The patriarch celebrates the Divine liturgy in St. Sophia with the utmost possible magnificence in the presence of the awed and astonished visitors from Russia.

[1] Nestor, viii.

If this is a genuine tradition it describes a wonderful case of open-minded truth-seeking, justly rewarded with success.

On their return to Kiev the commissioners presented the report of the results of their investigations to Vladimir. They were not attracted by the Mohammedan worship of the Bulgarians, nor did they take to the Latin rites they witnessed in Germany. But they brought back a glowing account of what they had witnessed in the great cathedral at Constantinople, saying, "When we stood in the temple we did not know where we were, for there is nothing else like it upon earth: there in truth God has His dwelling with men; and we can never forget the beauty we saw there. No one who has once tasted sweets will afterwards take that which is bitter; nor can we now any longer abide in heathenism."[1] This was before the sack of Constantinople by the Frankish and Venetian brigands in the so-called fourth Crusade. St. Sophia was still in its pristine glory before the barbarians had stripped it of its most magnificent decorations. These astonished ambassadors from the rude north found themselves in what was probably the finest building in the world and certainly the richest product of Byzantine art. Wherever they turned their eyes they saw gold, silver, precious stones, mosaic pictures, covering the whole surface of its walls and its wonderful soaring domes, while the elaborate brocaded vestments of the priests and the slow moving pomp of the service harmonised with the scene of surpassing magnificence. They were completely conquered.

It would seem then that where argument had failed ceremonial had succeeded, that what the monk had not been able to effect by his verbal exposition of doctrine the patriarch had triumphantly accomplished by the pomp and ceremony of a sumptuous ritual. Perhaps it would be more just to say that the emotional impression of the solemn service at Constantinople confirmed the intellectual conclusions which had preceded it at Kiev. Be that as it may, the fact is not a little significant that a religion which

[1] *Ibid.*

consists so largely in ceremonies should have been introduced most effectively into the country of its most extensive missionary triumphs under the influence of an impressive ceremony. Happily an inducement of a higher order is added as the final consideration which decided the cautious prince to decide for Christianity. The commissioners appealed to the memory of his grandmother Olga, saying, that if the religion of the Greeks had not been good she would not have embraced it. Vladimir was convinced, and simply asked, "Where shall we be baptised."

Another story, if it is more than a saga, does not show us his conversion in so pleasing a light. It would appear that Vladimir was besieging the Tauric town Cherson, then subject to the Greek Empire, when a traitorous priest within the walls sent him a note by means of an arrow, informing him that the way to take the city was to cut off its water supply in the aqueduct. The prince vowed that if he succeeded in taking the town he would be baptised, for was not his friend the priest a Christian? He took the town and kept his vow. Nevertheless, after his conversion Vladimir remained a gross, cruel sensualist, wading through blood to debauchery. He must have had great power at this time, for he was able to force the Emperor Basil to send him Anna, the emperor's sister, for his bride. The princess seems to have gone willingly, with the desire of carrying her religion into heathen Russia. Vladimir was both baptised and married at Cherson (A.D. 988), after which he restored the city to the Greek Empire. Thus again a Christian woman sat at the head of the Russian court and used her high influence to bring the people over to her faith. Anna had a much better opportunity than Olga. The ruler's grandmother had sown the seed; his wife reaped the harvest. In the interval of the two generations missionaries had been pouring over into Russia from the Byzantine Empire. Thus we may believe that Christianity was already working like leaven in the community, slowly permeating the mass, before the prince adopted it and proclaimed it as his own and the national religion. This fact

renders the action of Vladimir entirely different from that of Clovis when he forced the Franks to follow him in adopting his newly accepted religion. This was indeed a great missionary era. It has been reckoned as part of the Dark Ages; but that judgment only applies to Western Europe. This period saw the spread of the gospel over Bulgaria, Hungary, Bohemia, Saxony, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Poland, and lastly, to a considerable extent over Russia.

We must not, therefore, regard it as a mere act of subserviency to tyranny, that on the demand of their master multitudes of the citizens of Kiev with their wives and children flocked to the Dnieper, and there received baptism from the Greek priests who had come over to welcome them into the Church. Still, the impressiveness and sincerity of the scene must have been maimed by the ugly threat which accompanied the prince's invitation, for he had issued a proclamation on the day before the ceremony, that "whoever, on the morrow, should not repair to the river, whether rich or poor, he should hold him for an enemy."

The acceptance of Christianity by Vladimir and his people from Constantinople opened the way for intercommunication between Russia and the Byzantine Empire. Commerce followed the gospel. Art and culture came in its train. A Christian civilisation now began to spread slowly through Russia. The consequence was that in the course of the next century this country, which we are now accustomed to think of as the most backward of European nations, became more advanced than Germany or even France. She took a foremost place in the early part of the Middle Ages. Byzantine culture was now at its height and incomparably superior to the rude condition of the Western nations; and Russia now came in for a share of this rich civilisation. This was seen most evidently in the erection of churches, which Vladimir zealously carried on throughout the towns and villages of his dominions. Like Rameses II. in Eygpt, like Hadrian and Constantine and

Justinian in the Roman Empire, Vladimir gave himself enthusiastically to building operations, and left his mark on his country for all time in the lasting records of public architecture. His first building was the church of St. Basil at Kiev, planted on the very mound that had formerly been sacred to the god Perun, and from which the national deity's image had been hurled down in the enthusiasm of the popular conversion. These churches were all of the Byzantine order, although subsequently the style was Orientalised, being modified under Persian, and much more under Mongolian influences, to which are to be attributed its characteristic bulbous domes.

But Vladimir was more than a church builder. He saw that his churches were supplied with priests; he also established schools and eagerly promoted the education of the children of the boyars. The bishops, not less zealous in pushing forward their missionary enterprises, penetrated into the interior of Russia as far as the cities of Rostoff and Novgorod, so that Christianity was rapidly spread over a considerable area of Russia. This however must be regarded as little more than the scattering of seed broadcast. Moreover, seeing that it was done in some degree as a measure of State policy, it must have been characterised at first by the superficiality which is always seen in missionary work carried on with the aid of this tempting but delusive assistance. Neither Constantine, nor Clovis, nor Vladimir could really convert a nation by court influence.

This new Christian movement in Russia, which had originated in Constantinople, continued for a considerable time to look to the Greek capital for its sustenance and guidance. Michael, a Syrian by birth, is reckoned the first metropolitan in Russia; he died before the cathedral at Kiev was completed, and was succeeded by a Greek named Leontius, whom the patriarch of Constantinople had appointed. In the year 993, Leontius solemnly consecrated the building, and Vladimir celebrated the occasion by making a grant to the Church out of all dues and fines, customs and taxes, crops and cattle throughout his

dominion.[1] For this reason the cathedral was called "The Church of the Tithes."[2] The care of the building and the charge of the funds were entrusted to the priest Anastasius, whom Vladimir had brought from Cherson. From Greece also came the canons of the councils and the Greek laws for Church government. But from the first it was maintained that the Scriptures constituted the basis of Christian life and doctrine; and encouragement was given to the reading and study of the Bible. This characteristic of the Greek Church in contradistinction from the Roman passed over into the Russian Church, and is one of its happiest features.

Vladimir distinctly promised in his edict of the tithes —which might be called the *Magna Charta* or the "Bill of Rights" of the Russian Church—that neither he nor any of his descendants shall ever cite members of the clergy, their wives, monks or nuns, before the State tribunals, or usurp the judicial power which has been conceded to the Church. After enumerating a list of offences which he leaves the Church to deal with—such as divorce, poisoning, witchcraft, heresy, family wrongs—he adds: "In all these cases the Church is to pass judgment; but the prince and his boyars and judges shall not take cognisance of such judicial matters. These ecclesiastical privileges I have accorded to the holy bishops, in compliance with the decisions of the Church, and the seven œcumenical councils."[3] Most of this only applies to clerical offenders. In the case of a judicial matter between an ecclesiastic and

[1] Modern missionary work, being voluntary and resting on free-will offerings, is frequently crippled for lack of funds. When one enquires how the missionary activity of earlier times was maintained various answers have to be given. Most of the evangelisation of the West was carried on by monks whose wants were supplied by their own monasteries, or who worked for bare subsistence in their new homes or accepted gifts from their converts. But under State religions State funds supported the work. This was the case in Russia. Of course government support had to be paid for in government control, although this was subject to a distinct right of the Church to administer its own canon law.

[2] *Dessatingya.*

[3] A copy of the edict, contained in a codex of the thirteenth century, is given in full by Mouravieff, *Hist.*, Notes, pp. 357, 358.

a layman the tribunal is to be mixed, partly civil and partly ecclesiastical. Further, the State shall interfere to punish anybody who infringes the judicial rights of the Church.

Here then we see a Church established by the civil authority, endowed with State funds, privileged to govern itself and discipline its clergy and other ecclesiastical persons, and granted immunity from interference in the exercise of its rights and privileges. As yet there was no idea of the supremacy of the head of the State in the government of the Church, such as has subsequently come about in the person of the tsar. Vladimir's edict offered the Russian Church greater freedom than the Greek Church enjoyed under the Byzantine emperors. Everything depended on the degree of respect shown to the spirit as well as to the letter of this fundamental charter of the Church. Now it became customary for the bishop of each district to be selected by the prince of that district. Theoretically that was not in accordance with canon law; and practically it gave great power to the civil governor, who of course would be likely only to nominate a candidate who was *persona grata* to himself. Then every bishop had the right to appoint the priests, deacons, and inferior church officers in his diocese, and also the archimandrites (*i.e.* the abbots and abbesses) of the religious houses. Thus a firm hand was kept on the personnel of the Church, even though liberty was granted it in the exercise of its guaranteed functions.

In the pursuit of his missionary enterprises the metropolitan Leontius formed five dioceses—the first five in Russia—namely, Chernigoff, near Kiev, Novgorod in the north, Belgrod and Vladimir far in the north-east, and Rostoff still farther off in the same direction. These were not equally successful. At the ancient city of Novgorod, from which the ruling family had migrated to Kiev, Joachim of Cherson, the newly appointed bishop, was able to take the daring action of throwing the statue of the national god Perun into the river, without meeting any opposition on the part of the inhabitants.[1] On the other

[1] Nestor, viii.

hand, the first two bishops of Rostoff were driven away by the fierce tribes from the surrounding forests. Now, as on other occasions, we find the most enlightened people and those most in touch with the central life of the nation quickest to receive the new message, while the remote inhabitants of lonely places—the "heath-men," as our ancestors called them—are slowest to abandon their pagan habits.

Vladimir repeated his father's mistake in dividing his territory among his sons, with the same disastrous consequences. The result was that his death in the year 1015 was followed by a period of disorder. In the end the supreme power was secured by Yasolaf, the eldest son, who had received Novgorod in his father's partition. He appeared as the avenger of his two brothers Boris and Gled, who, it is said, had been murdered by another brother Sviatopolk while in the act of prayer, so that they have come to be honoured in the Church as Christian martyrs. Sviatopolk had seized Kiev; but Yasolaf succeeded in driving him into exile, and so came into possession of the southern capital. He ruled as a Christian prince, and his name is famous as that of the founder of the Russian code of laws.[1] His long reign was prosperous, and it saw a continuous spread of missionary activity throughout his dominions. Yasolaf not only confirmed the charter of rights which his father had conferred on the Church; he went further, and granted ecclesiastical personages exemption from all civil duties and payments. This was in accordance with precedents set by Constantine and Constantius in the Roman Empire. He took a personal interest in the study and translation of Greek Church writers, of whose works he collected a library at Kiev. At the same time he established schools for the training of candidates for the clerical office at the two chief towns—Kiev and Novgorod. Like his father, Yasolaf distinguished himself and immortalised his name by church building.

Earlier in this reign a prince named Mistislief built

[1] Known as *Russkaya Pravada* (Russian Law).

St. Saviour's Church at Chernigoff. This is reckoned the oldest church now standing in Russia. Yasolaf himself put up at Kiev the metropolitan cathedral, which he named St. Sophia, after Justinian's glorious temple, the ideal of all Greek and Russian churches. His son Vladimir built a second church of St. Sophia in Novgorod. Thus Russia had two modest copies of the famous Byzantine basilica—one in each of his capitals. The metropolitan Theopemptus—the first Russian metropolitan named by Nestor—came to consecrate the Kiev St. Sophia. On his death (A.D. 1051) occurred the first ecclesiastical breach with Constantinople. There had been war between the governments, in the course of which the Byzantine emperor, Constantine Monomachus, the third husband of the notorious Zoe, had put out the eyes of some Russian prisoners. Indignant at the cruel outrage, Yasolaf summoned the Russian bishops to elect a metropolitan from among themselves without reference to the patriarch of Constantinople, and they chose Hilarion, a peace-loving man of devout character, who was the first to move for reconciliation by seeking the benediction of Michael Cerularius the patriarch. This was granted, and thus the brief division between the two branches of the Eastern Church, the cause of which had been in no way ecclesiastical, was healed. The result of the reconciliation was a still closer connection between Constantinople and Russia. The patriarch's authority was being curtailed and crippled in the south by the inroads of the Turks and by the distracted condition of the Byzantine Empire, followed by attempts of emperors to effect union with Rome and the Western Church simply on political grounds, in order to obtain aid in withstanding the serious danger now menacing the empire. At this very time a vast new province of Christendom was opening up in the north and gratefully submitting itself to his rule. It looked as though what he was losing so disastrously in the old regions of the Eastern Church was about to be counterbalanced by splendid acquisitions of missionary achievements, first in Bulgaria,

but afterwards and much more effectually in Russia. For some time this really was the case, and the See of the patriarch of Constantinople became more extensive than it had been for many years. Thus, while the emperors were losing ground till they were at their wits' end to see how to retain their throne, the patriarchs were actually gaining new provinces and rising in importance among the churches of the East. But the prospect soon darkened. During one century Russia was torn with internal dissensions, and the next century saw her devastated by a disastrous Mongolian invasion. By the time when she recovered and the Church was again in a flourishing condition, great changes had taken place at Constantinople. The Latin kingdom and its sham patriarchate had come and gone. Meanwhile a foundation was being slowly laid for a new patriarchate at Moscow, and so at length for the supremacy of Russia over the orthodox Church.

Brilliant as were the missionary achievements of this early period, it must not be supposed that Russia was completely Christianised throughout the length and breadth of her vast territory. The new movement was chiefly confined to the towns, and there principally carried on among the more intelligent classes. The mass of the people long remained in heathen darkness even after the State had provided them with a church, to which they were forced to submit outwardly while they knew little of the vital character and spirit of the gospel of Christ. Virtually the same heathenism has clung to the peasants in combination with their ignorant notions of Christianity right down to our own day. It is only by recognising this significant fact that we can account for the grotesque phenomena presented by some of the sects. These phenomena are the products of an amalgam of ancient Sclavonic heathenism with perverted notions of Christianity. In the twelfth century Christian marriage was only practised by the upper classes. The lower classes still continued to follow their old pagan rites. When schools were established by the State and an attempt was made to compel the attendance of the children,

their parents wept, regarding literature as a dangerous kind of sorcery.

On the other hand, the leaven was working from the first, and some good results were to be seen throughout the population as a whole even in early times. Polygamy was abolished. The virtues of hospitality and philanthropy were recognised. Vladimir Monomachus wrote to his son: "It is neither fasting, nor solitude, nor the monastic life that will procure you eternal life. It is beneficence. Never forget the poor. Nourish them. Do not bury your riches in the bosom of the earth. That is contrary to the precepts of Christianity. Serve as father to the orphans, judge to the widows. Put to death neither innocent nor guilty; for nothing is more sacred than the life and the soul of a Christian."

There grew up in Russia a curious parallel to the custom of clinical baptism in the earlier days of the Church in the Roman Empire, as in the case of the deathbed baptism of Constantine the Great. It became customary for Russian princes to take the tonsure in the article of death. The tsars would smooth their passage to paradise by dying as monks.

The only literature known in Russia during these early times was religious or ecclesiastical, consisting of the Bible, the Fathers—especially St. Basil and St. Chrysostom, and lives of the saints; but some philosophy and so-called science were introduced. The romance of *Barlaam and Josaphat* was popular in Russia, as elsewhere throughout Christendom, in the early Middle Ages.

CHAPTER II

THE MONGOLIAN INVASION OF RUSSIA

(Books named in Chapter I.)

THE history of the foundation and establishment of the Church in Russia must be read with caution, since it rests on legends and traditions from one or two centuries before the age of the first chronicles. But in the year 1073, Nestor, the traditional father of Russian history, came to the monastery at Kiev.[1] From this time onwards there are contemporary records. Nestor's own chronicle is continued to A.D. 1113, and it is followed by other chronicles. At this point, therefore, we pass from more or less uncertain popular stories of the early Church in Russia to documentary evidence.

At this very time we also enter on a gloomy period of Russian history, consisting of two troublous centuries—first, the twelfth century, when Russia was torn with internecine strife; second, the thirteenth century, when she was swept and scoured and bled almost to death by a wave of invasion of Tartar tribesmen from the steppes of central Asia.

In the midst of the petty quarrels of the princelings who checked the progress of their country by their ambitions and jealousies, the Church had its own difficulties to contend with. The metropolitan George, who had been appointed in the year 1072, was a man of a gentle, timorous disposition, and he retired to Constantinople feeling unequal to his task in face of the troubles of the times. The Church was now dragged into the vortex of political

[1] Nestor, x.

affairs. The Prince Isyaslaff had been twice driven from Kiev by his brothers, when he turned for help to the emperor, Henry IV., and Borislaff, King of Poland. Now Poland was in the Roman Church, and more than once this country was used by the papal party as their point of attack on the Russian Church. At this time the most powerful of all the popes, Gregory VII., was dominating the councils of the West. Isyaslaff sought the great pope's intercession with the two sovereigns. Gregory's reply has been preserved among his letters.[1] It is most gracious. He has received Isyaslaff's son, who has come with the petition, and who, as the pope says, has admitted the papal authority, and wishes to have the kingdom as a grant from Peter through the pope, asserting that he makes this request with his father's full authority.[2] Here is Hildebrand's high claim to have the disposal of thrones and kingdoms in his hands, and his distinct assertion that it is admitted by the son of the Prince of Russia, with his father's deliberate consent. We should like to have had the young man's version of the story. It looks as though he had been as wax in the hands of the masterful ruler of empires. If it were indeed the case that he made this complete submission on behalf of Isyaslaff, we cannot imagine that the bargain would have been kept; if the prince had secured his throne by the help of a foreign alliance on such terms as these, he could only have held it as a tyrant against the wishes of his people. Fortunately he was able to regain his position without the aid he had solicited from abroad; and as he did not have occasion to claim his side of the bargain, we are not surprised that we hear no more about the other side. This was the first serious attempt of the papacy to obtain the great prize of Russia for the see of Peter.

Of the next metropolitan, John II., who was appointed

[1] Baronius's *Annals*, tome xi. p. 472.

[2] "Filius vester limina apostolorum visitans ad nos venit, et quod regnum illud dono Sancti Petri per manus nostras vellet obtinere, eidem beato Petro apostolorum Principi debitâ fidelitate exhibitâ," etc.

in the year 1080, Nestor, who was his contemporary, exclaims, "There will never be his like again in Russia." A learned, charitable, courteous, humble man, he holds a conspicuous place among the early bishops of Kiev. Another metropolitan, Nicolas, came forward as a peacemaker at a time of civil war, when Monomachus, a young prince who had married the daughter of Harold, the last Saxon king of England, was besieging Isyaslaff's son, Sviatopolk, at Kiev. A little later, when Monomachus had the upper hand, he was supported by an enlightened and eloquent metropolitan, Nicephorus.

In spite of repeated feuds and frequent disorders in the political world, quiet missionary work was still going on. From Polotsk the gospel now began to spread into Lithuania; from Novgorod it was carried farther north, and Moscow was founded as the result of an effort to convert the heathen in central Russia and introduce them to the civilisation of town life. The one bond of union during these troublous times was the Church with its common faith and life, and the chief ministers of peace were bishops and heads of monasteries. It was fortunate that the Church herself was not now divided. When a difference of opinion did arise from time to time, usually it turned on some minor point and proved to be only of a transient character. Towards the end of the twelfth century we meet with a temporary breach with Constantinople, which indicates the awakening of national jealousy. Russia was still being supplied with metropolitans from the Greek Church, when a second Isyaslaff, the grandson of Monomachus, determined to have a Russian for his chief bishop, urged it is said by dissatisfaction with the conduct of the deceased metropolitan, Michael, in absenting himself from Russia. Accordingly he followed the example of Yasolaff and summoned a synod of Russian bishops at Kiev to elect a successor to Michael. The only protest was raised by Niphont, bishop of Novgorod. All the other bishops acquiesced in the daring act of innovation. It was in vain that Niphont appealed to their written promise not to

celebrate the liturgy in the church of St. Sophia as a synod while they were without a metropolitan. He was silenced by a temporary imprisonment in the Pechersky Monastery, and the synod elected Clement, a monk of Smolensk. But how could he be ordained without applying to the patriarch at Constantinople? Here was a serious difficulty. The bishops found a way out of it by an ingenious device. In place of the imposition of the patriarch's hand, they laid on the candidate's head the reputed hand of St. Clement of Rome, which was among the precious relics that Vladimir had brought from Cherson. At a time when the corpses and bones of saints were valued as the greatest of treasures and credited with marvellous powers, such a use of the shrivelled hand of one of the most venerated successors of an apostle might be regarded as singularly efficatious. A curious feature of the incident is that the dead hand of a bishop of Rome is used to flout the claims of the bishop of the rival city of Constantinople. The quarrel lasted for nine years. It got entangled with the civil feuds, which were so fierce that one prince, Igor, who had been sent to a monastery, was torn to pieces by the populace when he reappeared in the city of Kiev. Soon after this the Prince Isyaslaff was forced to flee, taking Clement with him. Meanwhile Niphont was despatched to Constantinople to seek a duly appointed metropolitan. The patriarch Luke was only too glad to comply with so loyal a request, and he consecrated a man named Constantine as bishop of Chernigoff, and despatched him with all due qualifications to Kiev (A.D. 1136). Constantine proceeded to act with vigour in his new office, condemning the deeds of the unfortunate Isyaslaff and his metropolitan, Clement, and even suspending for a time all the clergy whom Clement had ordained. Thus apparently Russia was again brought into ecclesiastical submission to Constantinople. Niphont, who had stood out as a solitary Elijah among the priests of Baal, an Abdiel in the midst of the all but universal rebellion, did not live to reach Kiev and enjoy his triumph. But he had earned an undying

reputation in the orthodox Church, where he is reckoned among the saints as the "Defender of all Russia."

A turn in the wheel of fortune brought back the opposite party into power. Then Constantine was dismissed to his original see, where he ended his days, ordering in his will that his body should be cast out of the town as unworthy of burial. After it had been thus exposed for three days, it was buried with due honours in the church of St. Saviour. We may doubt whether the poor man's singular command should be attributed, as Mouravieff says, to "extraordinary humility,"[1] or to a melancholy sense of failure after his ambitious mission had begun so successfully.

Meanwhile, of course, the patriarch did not recognise Clement, who had been restored by the government and so had renewed the schism. Constantine was no longer available. Accordingly Luke appointed a third metropolitan, Theodore. Andrew Bogolubsky, one of the contending princes, wished him to make his own city of Vladimir the metropolitan see. He had built there the magnificent church of the Mother of God and deposited in it a miracle-working icon brought from Greece. If he had succeeded his daring policy might have cut the knot. Kiev would have been left high and dry with its discredited metropolitan, while the tide of Church favour flowed to the new ecclesiastical metropolis. But Luke was too wise to agree to the proposal. It would have meant a serious division in the Russian Church, not only between two parties, but between two great cities and their surrounding areas. Local ambition would then have been roused; and thus the schism would have been perpetuated long after any excuse for it had died away. All that the patriarch would do to honour the city of Vladimir was to allow the bishop of Rostoff to make it his centre, and sanction an annual festival in celebration of the prince's victory over the Bulgarians on the same day as that on which the Emperor Manuel celebrated his victory over the Saracens, a festival still observed on the first of August.

[1] P. 37.

But now the schism which had sprung out of personal and political sources was complicated with a charge of heresy. This charge is significant of much in the life of the orthodox Church during the Middle Ages. We are familiar with the grave accusation of heresy and its terrible consequences in the Western Church; but there it meant some serious departure from what were deemed great and vital elements of the creed. No such thing was seen in the case of the Russian heresy of the twelfth century. The Church was universally and securely settled in its faith. It had not sufficient originality of mind or intellectual interest to dream of loosening its moorings and entering on unknown seas of speculation. The daring heresiarchs of the East who have left their marks for all time on the course of the world's thought belong to the patristic period; those met with later are of the Western Church. The word heresy has shrunk to much narrower limits within the safe orthodoxy of the later Greek and Russian Church. Nestor, the bishop of Rostoff, who had been deprived of his diocese by the metropolitan Constantine, went to the Byzantine capital to defend his case and vindicate his rights. There he was met with a charge of heresy. The heresy was this, that he had forbidden people to break their Wednesday or Friday fasts even when the festivals of the Nativity and Epiphany fell on those days. The irregularity did not begin with Nestor, nor was he the only promoter of it. It was revived by a bishop named Leon, who had come into his diocese during his absence. Leon was first tried by the metropolitan at Kiev, and then at Constantinople by the patriarch. But the heresy was not crushed. It appeared at Kiev in the person of the metropolitan Constantine II., who adopted it in all innocence and convoked a synod to establish it; but he was opposed by two valiant champions of sound doctrine with regard to feasts and fasts, Cyril, bishop of Touroff, and Polycarp, archimandrite of the great Pechersky Monastery and continuator of Nestor's Lives of the Saints. This

man even suffered imprisonment for his fidelity in the matter.

Subsequently, in the course of the never-ending discords of these times, Kiev was taken by storm and visited with all the horrors of a sacked city. The orthodox Church regarded this as Heaven's just punishment for the heresy of her metropolitan. So ruinous was the disaster that the post of metropolitan remained vacant for about ten years, after which the city had sufficiently revived for a restoration of its ecclesiastical functions, and the patriarch of Constantinople then appointed a Greek, Nicephorus II. (A.D. 1185). But the storm-cloud which had rolled back for an interval soon gathered again, and Kiev was captured and sacked a second time, a fate from which she never recovered. Her ruin followed sixteen years later in the Mongol invasion. This ends the first period in Russian Church history. Hitherto Kiev had been the metropolis both of the State and of the Church, though sharing some of the honour with the older capital in the north, Novgorod. After her own civil wars and the cataclysm of the Asiatic invasion this was no longer the case.

The internal disorders of the twelfth century were followed in the thirteenth century by the infinitely greater disaster of the Mongol invasion. This was part of a vast movement that was sweeping up from Central Asia and threatening to engulf Europe in a sea of barbarism. The Mongols were of the same race as those devastating invaders known as the Huns, who had brought terror to Rome at an earlier period. But in course of time they became Mohammedans, the religion of the Prophet having passed on through Persia to the wild tribes of the region since known as Turkestan. Therefore we might regard their progress as that of the right wing of the vast army of Islam which was advancing in half-moon formation, and closing in upon the civilised world all round its limits from Russia to Spain. But this Mongol invasion had really no relations with the movements of the Moors in Africa and the West; it was the greatest of a series of

volcanic outbursts of wild peoples from the steppes of Asia. The terrible leader Genghis[1] Khan — "Chief of Chiefs"—became one of the world conquerers and empire founders whom we might compare with Alexander the Great, Julius Cæsar, or Napoleon, if only he had added more constructive genius to his military gifts and powers. At first the Russians appeared able to offer effectual resistance, and they gave the Mongol host a temporary check at the Kalka (A.D. 1224). But it was not long before the pent-up forces burst forth and carried all before them. First Vladimir was taken; then Kiev fell. Still, on marched the host, northwards as far as Novgorod, westwards absorbing Hungary, then peopled by a kindred race, the descendants of an earlier invasion, but now Christian. The invasion was only stopped at the frontier of Poland and Germany. By the end of the century the vast Mongol Empire extended from China to the borders of these countries of central Europe, covering all northern Asia and eastern Europe. The occupation of Russia lasted for three centuries.

It is not easy to imagine the enormous significance of this central fact in Russian history. The Mongol occupation cut that history in two, with the result that the second period, the period that follows the dismal gap of national effacement, differs in many serious respects from the earlier period, with which we were concerned in the previous chapter. The tendency of modern historians is to make less of this fact than was formerly assumed. Russian writers in particular are anxious to vindicate their country from a charge of having adopted Mongolian habits.[2] It seems clear that some of the Oriental customs which were practised by the Russians were due to the influence of Constantinople rather than to the effect of the Mongol invasion. For instance, there was a strict seclusion of women in the court of the

[1] Mr. Morfill spells the name Dchingish. M. Leroy Beaulieu spells it Djinghiz.

[2] *e.g.* Soloviev, the historian.

Byzantine Empire, which was imitated when Russia came under Byzantine influences, and therefore must not be attributed to Mohammedanism. Then the Sclavonic is certainly still the basal element in Russian life, as it always has been. Moreover, the Mongols had not the Roman genius for ruling. They let the local Russian princes govern their territories though subject to the supremacy of the "horde," wherever this moving army might be. Novgorod, isolated by its marshes and the barrenness of its neighbourhood, was left almost to itself in virtual independence. We must not regard the Mongols as a mere plague of locusts eating up everything they came across.

Nevertheless, after due allowance is made for these mitigating circumstances, the fact remains that the Mongol invasion left lasting effects on the national life of Russia. Many Russian princes married daughters of the Mongols. Later on, a nobleman of Mongolian origin, Boris Godunov, was elected tsar. Even in dress the influence of the Mongols was felt, and Russians adopted from them the long flowing robe known as the "caftan." A less pardonable Mongolian import was the knout, that horrible instrument of torture, the use of which was continued till the reign of Alexander I., and has been revived in the prisons of to-day. From the same source came the public flogging of debtors, which was subsequently abolished by Peter the Great. But the chief result of the Mongol invasion was that it cut Russia off from the West, and made it more and more an Eastern country. In the previous period Russia had belonged to the comity of European nations. It has been already remarked that her civilisation was then superior to that of France and Germany.[1] She was joined with Constantinople in the van of progress. But the Mongolian invasion put an end to this state of affairs. For the time being all national life seemed to be crushed. A cringeing attitude was forced on princes and people. The princes were compelled to travel to the horde—the movable court

[1] P. 363.

and camp of the khan—for their investiture, and to submit to its authority whenever it chose to interfere with them. To the horde they had to pay their tribute. Even at home they were hampered by the presence of residents called "baskàks." That thirteenth century, which is to us a very golden age—the age of St. Francis and the friars and the awakening of democratic religion throughout the West—the age of early English architecture and cathedral building—the age of the great English king Edward I. and the rise of the House of Commons—the age of Dante and the origin of modern literature—the age of Giotto and Fra Angelico and the beginnings of modern painting—this was in Russia the darkest of ages, the age of oppression and stagnation and misery. Russia had shared with Constantinople the glories of the earlier period, when the rest of Europe was abandoned to the barbarism which followed the break-up of the Roman Empire, and which we have been taught to call the Dark Ages. Now the case was completely reversed. The darkness lifted from the West, and a brilliant day dawned in England, France, and Italy; at the same time the darkness settled down on Russia—just when the abominable "Latin Empire" was filling Constantinople and the Eastern Church with gloom and misery.

This national calamity of Russia could not but have a profound effect on the Church and the course of her life during the period of trial. Here the first thing to observe is that the Mongols, even after they became Mohammedans, did not persecute the Christians in Russia. That country was still the land least stained with the blood of martyrs. It was when she began to persecute her own sons whom she reckoned heretics, the members of the various prohibited sects, that this cruelty became common in Russia. The Mongols permitted the Christians to enjoy their religion freely and to conduct its public services. The khans even protected the Church from attack, and exempted its property from confiscation. But this very fact had its peculiar influence, especially when it was combined with the political factors of the case. Russia

was now cut off from Constantinople. Like the prince, the metropolitan had to go to the horde for investiture. He, too, was required to cringe before the great khan. Then the Church centre was removed first to Vladimir, and afterwards to Moscow, which was quite out of reach from Constantinople. Ecclesiastically this is one of the most important results of the Mongol invasion. As regards the internal affairs of the Church, it meant independence. The Russian metropolitan was no longer subject to the patriarch of Constantinople. Thus the Russian Church became free from Greek control. This was one stage in the progress of her importance, to be followed later by her primacy in the holy orthodox Church, with the tsar as its head and protector.

A further consequence of the Moslem invasion is that from this time onwards religion and patriotism blend. It is like the union of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland with the Nationalist party. In some measure this result was brought about by the forced severance of connection with Constantinople. Hitherto the Church in Russia had been in some respects an exotic growth. Her metropolitans had been Greeks, appointed by the patriarch of Constantinople, despatched as foreign missionaries by this ecclesiastic of another country, not always even knowing the language of the people over whom they were imposed as their chief pastors. But after the Mongol conquest the metropolitans were Russians elected by native Russian bishops. Then, in the second place, the common misery of the alien yoke drove the Church along the same way as the nation, or rather awoke national instincts in connection with religion, and made the religious leaders ardent patriots. Thus, through these two influences, the Mongol invasion Russianised the Church in Russia.

It is more difficult to penetrate beneath the surface and discover how far the interests of religion itself were affected by this huge cataclysm; but it would seem that in some respects the trial was a stimulus to faith. In their desolation and wretchedness the people felt the need of religion.

Certain fascinating and exciting forms of religion are always found to flourish under such circumstances. The Jewish oppression under Antiochus Epiphanes, and again under the Romans, gave rise to apocalypses which painted the future in glowing colours for the people of God, but threatened doom for their oppressors. Similarly, during the Mongol oppression new prophecies were published and eagerly devoured; people saw strange visions; icons were unusually active in working miracles. At this time too a great impulse was given to monasticism. No doubt there was much poverty, for trade must have been terribly disorganised, and other miseries besides hunger drove multitudes into the monasteries. Many sought the calm seclusion of the monastic life simply because it was more congenial to their devotional temperament. But monasteries which were planted in remote and secluded places for the sake of the retirement sought by their inmates became centres of missionary activity. Thus Russia repeated the experience of Germany in an earlier age.

The consequence was that this very time, when the normal development of the Russians in civilisation and secular progress was checked and thrown back, Christianity was being spread farther afield in outlying regions of northern and eastern Europe by Russian monks. In the East the far-off place called Great Perm, near the Ural Mountains, formerly only visited by fur-hunters, was now both Christianised and won to Russia by the labours of a single monk, bearing the common monastic name Stephen. All alone he penetrated the forests, and, though opposed by the pagan priests, succeeded in winning a body of converts, for whom he built a rude church on the bank of the river Viuma. The metropolitan consecrated him bishop of Perm, where he laboured for many years; he retired to Moscow in his old age. Eudocia, or Eupraxia according to her name in the convent, founded the convent of the Ascension in the Kremlin; St. Euphemius established the celebrated monastery of the Saviour at Souzdal; St. Cyril founded the monastery of Bielo-ozero, one of the most

famous of all Russian monasteries. At first simply seeking for a retreat like St. Anthony in the desert, Cyril retired to the lonely shores of the White Lake; but his fame spread, and companions gathered about him peopling the solitude with lives dedicated to the service of religion. Here the traveller to-day sees a monastery of the first class, surrounded by two strong walls flanked by lofty towers, and armed with cannons. The enclosure contains two monasteries, a greater and a lesser. The greater monastery lies between the inner and the outer walls; it has nine churches built of stone. The lesser monastery is within the second wall. This monastery is said to possess the richest treasures of gold-embroidered and jewelled vestments in the empire. In earlier days it earned a more laudable reputation, for then it was a centre of missionary activity in still more remote regions. One of its offsprings is the Solovetsky Monastery, which is built on one of a cluster of islands lying out north of the bay of Onega in the White Sea. The island is inaccessible for nearly eight months of the year on account of ice-floes; but during the summer it is visited by crowds of pilgrims.

This monastery in its turn, long regarded as the northernmost outpost of the Russian Church, became a centre of missionary activity in Arctic regions. On a rocky island on Lake Loubensky, not far from Bielo-ozero, there lived a community of monks who were engaged in preaching the gospel to the Finnish tribe of the Chondes. The monk Lazarus founded a monastery on the shore of Lake Onega as a missionary centre for the conversion of the Laplanders, while the monks of Salaam on the neighbouring Lake Ladoga also evangelised these people. In the south and east, and throughout the greater part of her country, Russia was now down-trodden and distressed by a cruel, barbarous yoke. Yet we see these very years of her oppression to be the times of greatest activity in the extension of Christianity on her inhospitable borders out of reach of the Asiatic intruder. History has few more inspiring tales to tell than this record of the sweet

that came out of the bitter, the honey from the lion's mouth. The Russian Church was never more fruitful in winning converts to the gospel than when so many of her sons had fled from before the oppressor, not to rest in peace, but to take up new work, and utilise their exile in the service of their Lord. Thus the dreadful Mongol invasion, which on the surface appeared to be nothing but a curse to the Church as well as to the nation, proved to be the unintentional stimulus of wide-spreading missionary activity, and indirectly the means of transmitting the greatest benefits to unknown tribes by the northern seas.

CHAPTER III

THE REVIVAL OF RUSSIA

Books named in Chap. II.; also for Ivan the Terrible, *Early Voyages and Travels to Russia and Persia* (The Hakluyt Society), 1856; Leroy Beaulieu, *The Empire of the Tsars*, Eng. trans., 1893–96.

At Rome the popes were always ready to regard the distress of the East as their own opportunity; and more than once the threatened approach of the Turks to Constantinople had opened up the way for negotiations between the Lateran and the Byzantine court. A similar condition is to be observed in Russia under the Mongol oppression. The orthodox Church appeared to be now in the most helpless and hopeless condition. The Latin conquest of Constantinople had forced the Greek patriarch into exile, and his immediate task was to gather together the scattered remnants of his authority, while a usurper, a bishop of the papal Church, was sitting on his throne at St. Sophia. Thus harassed and hampered, he could not be expected to do anything to help his protégés in the north. Under these circumstances the Pope Innocent IV. proposed to assist Russia by raising a crusade against the Mongols on condition of union with Rome. With this end in view he sent his legates to the two princes, Alexander at Novgorod, and Daniel, the Prince of Galick in the south. The former, being fairly out of the reach of the invaders, could afford to reject the papal overtures; but Daniel, whose territory was suffering from the full force of the Asiatic scourge, accepted the crown the pope had sent him and with it the title of King of Galick, though shrewdly postponing the execution

of his part of the proposed bargain till an œcumenical council had decided on the question of the union of the two Churches.

The post of metropolitan of Kiev had been vacant for ten years during the troubles of the times. This old political capital and ecclesiastical centre of Russia had been sacked, and its principal buildings, which had been used as fortresses during the siege—the cathedral of St. Sophia, the church of the Tithes, the monastery of St. Michael, and the great Pechersky Monastery—all captured one after the other and destroyed. Daniel now took steps to fill the vacancy. At the very time when he was carrying on his negotiations with the pope he was also in communication with the patriarch Manuel II. He selected a patriotic Russian named Cyril to be metropolitan of Kiev, and sent him to Nicæa for consecration (A.D. 1250). Cyril proved to be a great bishop; it is to his energy that we must attribute in a large measure the rapid revival of the Church in Russia after the stunning blow it had received from the Mongol invasion. Cyril left the ruins of Kiev, passed through the desolate towns of Cheringoff and Riazan, and travelled on to Novgorod, which had escaped the scourge. There he consecrated an archbishop and met the Prince Alexander on his return from a journey to the horde to pay his homage to the khan. The camp of the nomadic Mongols had been moved from place to place during times of war; but now it was settled at Sarai. Since many Russians were actually resident there, or were at least compelled to go there from time to time to visit their foreign master, Cyril made it a bishopric, and consecrated Metrophanes, its first bishop. This see remained in being as long as the Mongol power existed; it was brought to an end when the horde was broken up.

In the year 1274, Cyril summoned a synod at Vladimir on the occasion of the consecration of Serapias, the archimandrite of the Pechersky Monastery, to the bishopric. The synod set about a reformation of Church discipline with a view to rooting out simony and other abuses, and

exacting enquiry into the character of candidates for orders. The extreme importance attached to minutiæ of ritual in the Eastern Church is well illustrated by the special emphasis which was afterwards given to this synod's prohibition of the custom of mixing the holy chrism with oil, and of the use of affusion instead of immersion in the rite of baptism.

When Cyril died (A.D. 1281), for a short time no successor was appointed, because, although the Latin usurpation was at an end, and Michael Palæologus was now reigning at Constantinople, both the emperor and his patriarch were suspected of inclinations towards Rome. But when, after the death of Michael (A.D. 1282), his son Andronicus restored the orthodox Joseph, that patriarch sent into Russia Maximus, a Greek, to be metropolitan. It is to be observed that whenever the Russian prince chooses a metropolitan he selects a man of his own nationality, and that whenever the patriarch nominates anybody for the office he takes care to send a Greek. We may see in these facts a portent of the future, when Russia could dare to be more independent. In the last year of this gloomy thirteenth century the metropolitan Maximus moved his centre from the ruined Kiev and its desolated neighbourhood to the new capital, Vladimir. It was not long there; for on his death (A.D. 1305) it was removed to Moscow, a city destined to be the great metropolis of the Russian Church and empire for many years to come.

To add to the troubles of these dark times, the princes, who were allowed a measure of home rule under the suzerainty of the khan, quarrelled among themselves. The Church was then the one bond of unity for the unhappy Russian people, and the metropolitan bishop its one visible centre. Thus this ecclesiastic acquired temporarily in Russia some shadow of the influence that was exercised by the pope in Italy during the quarrels of the barons. It was the perception of this fact that led Prince John at Moscow to invite the metropolitan to come from Vladimir and reside

at his capital. Meanwhile another movement was going on in the West. In the year 1392, Lithuania was brought into connection with Poland; eighteen years later, its prince, Vitovt, defeated the Teutonic knights,[1] and so stayed the encroachments of Germany and the papal influence. In order to strengthen his independence both politically and ecclesiastically, Vitovt requested the patriarchs of Constantinople to appoint a metropolitan for Kiev. This would have involved the independence of Moscow and its metropolitan. But the patriarch would not comply. Then Vitovt convoked a synod of his orthodox bishops, which elected a Bulgarian, Gregory Tsamblak, to the new office.

Gregory was orthodox according to the Greek standard. But Vitovt sent him to the council of Constance, which was then in session. A little later the metropolitan Photius seized a favourable moment for visiting both Vitovt and Yagello the King of Poland. The death of Photius was followed by a time of miserable dissentions at Moscow. Vitovt died, and his successor, Svidrigailo, sent Gerasimus, the bishop of Smolensk, to Constantinople to be appointed metropolitan of Kiev. For some reason not easy to divine, the patriarch Joseph consented. He may have thought that the disorderly condition of Moscow unfitted that new metropolis to be the seat of a primate. But he may also have had some foresight of the inevitable consequence of the removal of the metropolitan so far beyond the reach of Constantinople. There does not seem to have been any formal act on the part of the patriarch to put the central and eastern parts of Russia under the new metropolitan. Nevertheless, the appointment of Gerasimus as metropolitan of Kiev while the see of Moscow was vacant could not but imply a transference of the ecclesiastical centre of gravity. Joseph could not recognise any independent Church of Lithuania. To the patriarch of Constantinople both Russia proper and the Western provinces on its border were but parts of the one holy orthodox Church.

[1] An order established to convert the heathen Lithuanians by force.

There is not much advantage in discussing this curious situation, because even though appointed metropolitan by the patriarch, Gerasimus was unable to exercise any influence in Russia, or to be recognised by any of the Russian bishops. Though it was his wish to go to Moscow and establish himself there, he had to remain at Smolensk. Had he succeeded, the patriarch would have gained nothing by his appointment. The magnitude of the Russian Church would have left Lithuania hanging on its fringe as a mere outlying district, and Constantinople would have had no better security for the retention of its influence and authority. If we are to understand that from the first Joseph had intended Gerasimus to reside at Moscow, it is difficult to discover what good he could have hoped to reap from his unpopular act in thrusting an outsider on the Russian Church. Russia had not always submitted to Greek metropolitans with good grace. But to be governed by a Lithuanian when Lithuania was independent and looking to Poland for sympathy, certainly this was not a thing for her to meekly accept even from the hands of the patriarch.

Nor did Lithuania itself ultimately profit. Gerasimus came to an awful end. His friend and patron Svidrigailo was informed that he was carrying on a treasonable correspondence with Sigismund, a rival claimant to the principality. In a rage at the ingratitude of a man whom he had so much favoured, the prince burnt him alive. After this tragedy the ecclesiastical independence of Lithuania came to an end. Her metropolitan was never able to take the lead of the Russian Church. But she was not strong enough to stand alone. The inevitable drift was in the opposite direction. The independence of Lithuania was maintained for almost a century and a half, and then ended by the diet of Lublin (A.D. 1568). Gradually the leading families joined themselves to Poland and accepted the Roman Catholic religion, and the people followed.

We now come to the important events associated with the career of Isidore. At this point Russia emerges from her comparative isolation, and in the person of her ecclesiastical

representative takes a leading place in the history of the universal Church. When the Emperor John was preparing for the council, which, as he hoped, was to bring about the union of Christendom and so help him in his resistance to the encroachments of the Turks, Isidore was sent from Constantinople to be metropolitan at Moscow. He was deliberately chosen as a man favourable to the union of the Eastern and Western Churches, and it has been maintained that the Pope Eugenius had actually intrigued for his appointment. Nevertheless, he met with a warm welcome in Russia. Both Kiev and Moscow gave him a public reception. But he had not been in office more than four months when he urged the prince, Basil, to permit him to attend the council that was to meet in Italy, and obtained a reluctant consent, on the ground that otherwise Russia would be the only Christian country excluded. It was a difficult position. At Constantinople the emperor was straining every nerve to be reconciled with Rome in order to obtain the aid of the Western powers. But Constantinople's danger was not felt at Moscow, and there nobody had the slightest wish for union, except the one Greek at the head of the Church who had been sent there for the express purpose of helping it on.

The princes and prelates assembled at Ferara waited for Isidore, as representing the largest branch of the Eastern Church, before opening the council. As soon as he arrived the sessions began. It will be remembered [1] that while Mark of Ephesus led the opposition, Bessarion, the metropolitan of Nicæa, and Isidore of Moscow were foremost in supporting the proposals for union. After the council had been transferred to Florence, and when at length Eugenius had triumphed and the union was declared, Bessarion and Isidore were both rewarded by being made cardinals, and the latter received the title, "Cardinal Legate of the Apostolic See in Russia." He returned home triumphant. He had accomplished his object—at Florence. But what was the good of that if his action should not be ratified in Russia?

[1] See p. 268.

Isidore seems to have deceived himself with the notion that he could simply assume that in what he had done he had carried his Church with him. So enamoured was he of the papal idea, that he seems to have behaved like a pope himself. He appears to have been deluded by the enthusiastic reception that had been accorded him when he first came to Moscow. But then the people were delighted at having a metropolitan of their own after a long interval, during which the Lithuanian metropolitan had been trying to get the upper hand in Russia. Now the case was very different. Without consulting his bishops the metropolitan had surrendered the chief points of dispute between the Eastern and Western Churches. It looked like a betrayal of trust. We are prepared for the sequel.

Isidore is conducting the service at the church of the Assumption on the first occasion after his return. The archdeacon standing by his chair has read the acts of the council of Florence to an astonished congregation. Isidore names the pope in his prayers. Then the Prince Basil cannot contain his indignation. He calls Isidore a traitor to orthodoxy and a false pastor.

The first step is to summon a council of bishops and boyars. They come together as men of one mind. Not a bishop, not a lord will own the pope as vicar of Christ. Every member of the council without exception rejects the Western doctrine of the procession of the Holy Spirit. This means the condemnation of their metropolitan. In spite of his skilful pleading he can make out no case to win a single vote for his side. The issue is the banishment of Isidore to the Choudoff Monastery.

The subsequent story of Isidore is full of adventure. He escaped from his prison and fled to Rome. Thence he was sent to Constantinople to attempt there what he had been unable to effect in his own see. The Greeks were as reluctant as the Russians to submit to the Florentine decision. Isidore was one of the ablest men of the day; but ability counted for little when confronted with age-long orthodoxy. His efforts were brought to an abrupt

termination by the last act in the tragedy of the Eastern Empire. While the Christians were quarrelling the Turks were advancing. At the capture of Constantinople by Mohammed II., Isidore was one of the many Greeks who fled to Italy. No one had earned a better right to an asylum at Rome, and there he was rewarded with the phantom title of "Patriarch of Constantinople."

A shadowy attempt to maintain the papal authority which Isidore had vainly tried to introduce into Russia was made in the appointment of one of his followers named Gregory as metropolitan of Kiev. But although he was recognised by Casimir, the Prince of Lithuania, Gregory was never acknowledged by the Church in Russia or even in Lithuania. The schism was maintained for some time by the appointment of a succession of Latin metropolitans at Kiev; but these men had no following. They can only be regarded as papal agents resident in a country over which they exercised no authority and in which they were not in any way recognised by the people or the Church.

The fall of Constantinople, which makes the year 1453 a landmark in the history of Europe, while it was followed by disastrous effects on the Greek Church in the dominion of the Turks, only had an indirect influence on the Church in Russia. Ecclesiastically the immediate consequence was the gaining of independence. The Russians were no longer made to look to the imperial patriarch for the appointment of their chief pastor. The metropolitan was now elected by a council of Russian bishops. Still, there was no breach of Church unity; the Russian Church remained in communion with the oppressed Greek Church, as a branch of the one holy orthodox Church, and was still nominally subject to the patriarch of Constantinople. Jonah, who had been appointed after a vacancy of eight years to succeed the deposed Isidore, was the last primate who bore the title "Metropolitan of Kiev." His successors were named "Metropolitan of Moscow and of all Russia." Thus the change which had

long been an accomplished fact was now openly recognised in that most conservative of all spheres—the ecclesiastical vocabulary.

Another influence, more positive in character, now came in to advance the importance of the Greek Church. This was the rise of Russia as a great united nation. Hitherto, although a certain common life had pulsated through the populations scattered over the vast area which we now know as European Russia, this was not unified under one government. We have seen how Lithuania established independence in conjunction with Poland. Novgorod was also virtually unattached to the southern Sclavs and administered as a separate republic. Other districts had their autonomy under different princes. Even the chief rulers at Kiev, and afterwards at Vladimir, were regarded as princes, or grand dukes, not as kings or emperors. But soon after the destruction of the Byzantine Empire there appeared in the north a new empire, the Russian Empire. Thus the rise of Russia as a great united nation nearly synchronises with the fall of the power that had stood for Rome in the East. This most important historical fact was mainly brought about by the ability and energy of Ivan III., who reigned for forty-three years—from A.D. 1462 to A.D. 1505. The power of the horde had now broken up and crumbled away, leaving only scattered fragments, such as the Mongol settlement in the Crimea. A strong ruler had a clear course for the consolidation of his nation. Ivan took a politic step in marrying Zoe, a niece of the heroic Constantine Palæologus, with the approval of Pope Sixtus IX., who saw in the match a hope of the fulfilment of the dream of the papacy and chief end of all its diplomacy—the union of Christendom under the pope. Here, however, he was mistaken. Zoe proved to be a devoted member of the Eastern Church. On the strength of this connection with the Byzantine imperial family Ivan assumed the cognisance of the double-headed eagle, ever afterwards the badge of Russia, and also in a tentative way the title of

Tsar.[1] It was a broad hint that the empire of the East which had perished at Constantinople was to have its resurrection at Moscow. Ivan laid the foundations of empire broad and deep. He was anxious to encourage letters and civilisation, and he welcomed many learned Greeks who came to Moscow with the Princess Zoe, bringing precious manuscripts with them. In some degree Russia shared in the scattering of pearls of learning which followed the flight of the scholars from Constantinople, and brought the works of classic literature, together with the scholars who could interpret them, to Western Europe. Moscow never enjoyed the Renaissance, as that wonderful awakening was enjoyed by Florence and Basle. On the other hand, it must be remembered that, unlike the benighted West, before the Mongol invasion Russia had been in close touch with the life of Constantinople. Italian architects also visited the progressive city of Moscow. The most important of these was Aristotle Fioraventi, who designed many of the most important public buildings.

We look to see what part the Church had in the life and movement of the new age. There was no reformation in Russia. That is the first broad fact to be noticed, differentiating the new empire of the tsars from the West. Russia had not suffered from the abuses of the papacy; she had not experienced the tyranny of the popes which drove German princes to revolt quite apart from the interests of religion; she had no doctrine of purgatory and no sale of indulgences—Luther's first provocation. Not entering into the great intellectual awakening which so opened men's eyes in regard to religion as well as secular knowledge that in England it was popularly known as "the new learning," she missed its inspiration of new

[1] This title—corresponding to the Latin "Cæsar"—did not necessarily involve a claim to the supreme position, since that had been designated by the higher name "Augustus." Roman emperors had given dependent princes the honorary designation of Cæsar, under their own imperial suzerainship. Nevertheless, it is doubtful whether among the Russians in this late age the distinction was recognised.

ideas. Having had the Bible from the first in the vernacular she had no such experience as that which resulted from its translation into English and German, and the consequent popularising of Scripture as a long lost treasure gladly recovered. Lastly, she had no Luther, no Zwingli, no John Knox. On the other hand, in justice to the Sclavonic race represented by Russia, it should be remembered that John Huss was a Sclav; and in some respects John Huss was the parent as he certainly was the precursor of the Reformation on the Continent. Originating in an Englishman, Wycliffe, the first of the reformers before the Reformation, it passed through Huss the Bohemian into Germany, and so came back from the Sclav to the Teuton again.

Now, though Russia did not need reformation to the extent that was requisite in Europe, because she was not suffering from the specific corruptions of the Roman Church at the end of the Middle Ages, she had her own superstitions derived from a still earlier period, in the magical value attached to icons and relics by the mass of the people, as well as what some would consider to be the errors of both branches of the Church in their departure from the primitive type. At all events, in so far as the Reformation, over and above its Iconoclasm, was a religious awakening, to Protestants it must be a matter of regret that Russia had no share in it. The common habit of treating the Western Church as though it were the whole Church has resulted in regarding the Reformation as a movement stirring Christendom to its depths, instead of which it was simply a Western movement. Great churches occupying vast areas of Europe, Asia, and Africa, were quite outside its range, being neither scourged by the evils against which it protested nor favoured with the factors of its new life.

The consolidation of the Russian Empire under Ivan III. and his successors was accompanied by quite another stimulus to devotion. In the West the year 1000 had been anticipated with terror as the destined date of the

end of the world; a similar alarm was felt in Russia towards the close of the fifteenth century, on the ground that the seven-thousandth year after the Creation was approaching. Then the boyars showed their zeal by building a number of private churches. A curious result followed. Priests were sent to private churches apart from the parochial clergy. Being responsible only to their patrons who had appointed and who alone supported them, they were indifferent to the bishops and independent of the State, since they did not live upon the tithes. Accordingly, these chaplain priests were charged with insubordination and suspected of laxity of morals due to the absence of ecclesiastical discipline. We must not admit this scandal too readily, knowing the source from which it comes.

Instead of the dreaded end of the world, what Russia now came to experience was a final and victorious conflict with the Mongols. The Church took a leading part in this patriotic effort. An old man, Bassian, archbishop of Rostoff, encouraged Ivan with the utmost enthusiasm, declaring that if the sovereign would not go he would lead the assault; he was seconded by Gerontius the metropolitan, and Ivan set out to attack the Mongols. Their chief Achmed fled without striking a blow, and Russia was free again.

A strange light is thrown on the mind of the Church at this time by the story of Gerontius's successor, the metropolitan Zosimus. This man had been appointed by Ivan without the consent of a synod (A.D. 1491). He was accused of adopting "a blasphemous Jewish heresy which rejected our Saviour Jesus Christ and all His doctrine." A Jew named Zachariah was said to have brought the heresy from Lithuania to Novgorod twenty years before, and to have seduced two priests in that city, Alexis and Dionysius, by magic and cabalistic art. When Zosimus was at Novgorod he met the two priests, and was so drawn to them that he brought them with him back to Moscow, and appointed one to be the chief priest at the famous new

Church of the Assumption and the other to be chief priest of the Church of the Archangel. In this way the suspected teaching was introduced to the very heart of the empire on the highest ecclesiastical authority. The heresy which the Jew had whispered in the closet was now preached on the housetop. But Gennadius, the Prince of Novgorod, would not let the matter rest. He viewed the new teaching with horror, and induced Ivan and Zosimus to summon a synod on the question. Joseph of Volokolamsk appeared as the eloquent champion of orthodoxy, and the heresy was condemned. Alexis had already passed to the silence "beyond these voices." But Dionysius was alive to receive his anathema, and he was punished with imprisonment in a convent. Zosimus himself was spared for the time being. But twelve years later he was required to resign by Ivan and sent off to a monastery on the ostensible ground of drunkenness (A.D. 1496). So grave was the idea of the head of the Church being guilty of heresy that this shocking scandal was hushed up under cover of what was regarded as the milder evil of intemperance.

After this the new metropolitan Simon presided over a synod which was called to bring about a reformation of morals. It ordered that convents for women should be kept apart from the religious houses for men, and that no men should perform Divine service in them—a drastic measure that throws a lurid light on the suspected consequences of the visits of priests to these convents in discharge of the duties of their holy office. The same synod enacted the canon, which has obtained down to our own day, that a priest must give up his cure on the death of his wife and retire into a monastery—so dangerous did the Russian Church consider a celibate priesthood to be. Priests of unworthy characters were to be deprived of their posts and degraded from their orders. The enactments of this synod imply a recognition of serious moral decay in the Church.

Meanwhile practices little better than the doings of savages were witnessed in the court. One physician—who

had staked his head in undertaking the case—was publicly executed for not saving the life of Ivan's eldest son whom he was called in to cure; another—a German—for failing in his treatment of a Tartar prince at court, was put to the torture by the chief's son, who would have let him off alive for a ransom. The grand duke, to use the chronicler's title, would not allow this; so "they took him to the river Moska, under the bridge in winter, and cut him to pieces with a knife, like a sheep." The decay of morals is further reflected in the *Sudebuik*, a code of laws which Ivan issued in the year 1497 and which marks the second stage in Russian jurisprudence, the first being seen in the *Russkaya Pravada*.[1] Clearly the rise of the tsardom and the consolidation of Russia into a great empire, while indicative of a kind of progress, and while really associated with a certain spread of culture, must not be confounded with an advance of the people in those higher things that make for a nation's real greatness; nor may the corresponding development of the Church be taken as a proof that the spirit of Christianity was becoming a power in the land.

Ivan III. was followed by his son Basil (A.D. 1505), and he in turn by his son Ivan IV., known as "Ivan the Terrible."[2] This strong, capable ruler was the first to definitely and persistently denominate himself tsar, and so make a bold, open claim to be the heir of the Roman Cæsars, or at least their equal. His grandfather had only used the title casually and tentatively. Ivan IV. had no hesitation about the adoption of it.

Ivan was but a child ten years old when his father died (A.D. 1533), and the government was administered first by his mother and then by the boyars, till he was able to take it up himself. For a time he ruled well under the guidance of an old priest of Novgorod, named

[1] P. 367.

[2] In Russian this surname means one to be reverenced or respected; and it was originally applied to Ivan as a title of honour. History, however, has justly connected it with its more ugly signification.

Silvester. At the age of seventeen he issued a revised edition of his grandfather's *Sudebuik*, and the next year the *Stoglat* or "Book of the Hundred Chapters" appeared. Its object was to reform the discipline of the Church, and among other improvements it ordered was the establishment of schools throughout the country, where reading, writing, and choral singing were to be taught.

The second half of Ivan's reign was totally different in character. He had greatly increased the importance of Russia by his military achievements; but later on he grew suspicious of the disaffection of the boyars, and his conduct bordered on insanity. Ivan now went about the country with a body of six hundred young men, whom he called his "Peculiars," burning and ravaging his towns and villages. He claimed the lives of his slaves, the Russians, as his property. In a fit of passion he killed his own son. Yet Ivan was religious in his way. He prided himself on his orthodoxy, and was credited with being able to repeat whole chapters of the Bible. He would ring the bell for matins himself and call up his court at all hours of the night to attend the prayers. When at Alexandrooskoe he spent most of his time in church. He practised severe asceticism and attempted to force it on his servants.

One metropolitan after another fell under the displeasure of the pious tyrant. When the tsar's insane degeneration set in, Athanasius, the metropolitan in office at the time, being of a mild, timid nature, retired from his responsible post, unable to meet its new requirements. Ivan then appointed Germanus, the archbishop of Kazan, a good old man, who begged to be excused from undertaking the difficult task that was laid upon him. But the tsar would have no refusal. Germanus, forced to accept the post, now resolved to do his duty in it. He at once sought an interview with Ivan, and in a faithful, earnest, fatherly way, urged him to turn from his ruinous course. Such impertinence was intolerable. The tsar flung himself into a rage, and forthwith sent the old bishop back to his former diocese.

Ivan's next choice fell on a friend of his childhood, the monk Philip, who had retired to the wild solitude of the Solovetsky, where his influence was stimulating the monastery's missionary work round the borders of the White Sea. In his queer way the tsar felt the fascination of the venerable man's holiness, and chose him as his spiritual adviser. Philip wept at the compulsion that dragged him from his retirement. But he went forth with the spirit of a hero and a martyr. Rarely did any man undertake a more perilous duty. He would gladly have escaped the task; but now that it was laid upon him, like his predecessor Gerontius, he determined to discharge it faithfully to the full. Philip called on the bishops to help him in opposing the tsar's tyrannical conduct. Some were openly conniving at it; others, though disapproving dared not offer a word of protest. They united in warning the metropolitan of the danger to Church and State from irritating the tyrant. But Philip would not hear of any compromise with iniquity. On the day of his consecration he uttered fearless words of admonition in his reply to the tsar's address of recognition, and Ivan submitted to them, being at present under the spell of his veneration for the speaker.

It was not long before a fresh outbreak of cruelty on the part of Ivan sent the boyars to Philip for protection. Then he behaved like a second Ambrose, but under very different circumstances. The mad Ivan was a far more dangerous person to confront than Theodosius, passionate Spaniard though he was. Yet Philip would not recognise Ivan when he came to the church with his "Peculiars," and when the metropolitan's attention was called to the tsar's presence he refused to own him. When Ivan would have silenced the bold pastor with threats, Philip exclaimed, "I am a stranger and a pilgrim upon earth, as all my fathers were, and I am ready to suffer for the truth. Where would be my faith if I kept silence?"[1]

Although the tsar left the church in a towering rage,

[1] Mouravieff, p. 115.

even yet he did not dare to lay violent hands on the revered metropolitan. But a little later some charge was trumped up against Philip, and a slavish law court then pronounced his deposition. While he was conducting the liturgy in his church a crowd of "Peculiars" rushed in and stripped him to his shirt—a brutal act ordered by the spiteful tsar in revenge for the public rebuke he had received in church from the metropolitan. Dragged before Ivan, Philip besought the tsar to mend his ways, but in vain. Philip's punishment for this new act of daring was to receive the bleeding head of his nephew sent by the tsar as a present to him in prison. He was then banished to the Otroch Monastery in Tver, where after a short time he was strangled by Ivan's order. The story of Philip is worth telling in detail for the sake of the revelation of a noble character which it contains; but also because it relates to the one recognised "martyr" among her prelates in the Church of Russia—a Church singularly free from persecution during the whole course of her history.

Ivan reigned for fifty-one years, and died in the year 1584. His career has been a puzzle for the historians. Not only did it vary greatly in character during successive periods, but throughout it revealed a nature of startling contrasts and inconsistencies. The cruel tsar was intensely religious in his own way, but he was actively interested in literature and culture. He set up the first printing press in Moscow, where the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles were printed under the superintendence of the metropolitan Macarius during the happy early part of this reign. A little later the tsar had a copy of the Gospels printed, and after that the entire Bible was printed in Sclavonic at Kiev, under the directions of Constantine the deputy-governor.

Some of Ivan's actions were rather the achievements of a strong, capable ruler than the doings of a mere despot, even when he was most tyrannical. In the course of the consolidation of Russia he destroyed the ancient liberties of Novgorod, which hitherto had governed itself as a practically

independent republic. This may be compared to the later policy of Russia in invading the freedom of Finland. It was cruel to the subjects; yet it was regarded as a political necessity by the government. Like the State, the Church at Novgorod was in a way self-contained. In the earlier times, throughout the rest of Russia the clergy were more or less Greek, or at least under the influence of the Greek patriarch. But at Novgorod they were entirely Russian, and the archbishop was elected by the citizens without waiting for any investiture from the metropolitan of Kiev. He took the first place of dignity in the republic; in acts of State his name was cited before all other names. Novgorod wanted to have a metropolitan; but that was not allowed, and now Ivan's vigorous action put an end to both its political and its ecclesiastical independence.

The remarkable contrasts which the life of Ivan contains have given rise to conflicting views about his character. The Polish poet Miçkiewicz describes him as "the most finished tyrant known in history." The historian Karamsin—in his eloquent denunciation of this tyrant which he read to Alexander I., with the liberal tsar's approval—writes, "His conversion would have scandalised the world and shaken belief in providence. He had advanced too far into hell to be able to turn back." Karamsin regards him as a prince born vicious and cruel, miraculously brought into ways of virtue for a time, and abandoning himself to fury in his later years; and Kostomarof follows on similar lines. On the other hand, Soloviev distrusts the partisan tales on which his evil reputation rests. He was opposed by the nobles whose independence he was limiting, and they would be only too ready to encourage discreditable stories about their ruler. But M. Ramabaut calls attention to one terribly significant piece of evidence—a document preserved at the monastery of Cyril, in which Ivan asks for the prayers of the Church for his victims by name—how characteristic is this of his mixture of religion and cruelty! This document contains 986 proper names, and references

to as many as 3,470 persons. In some cases a name is followed by one of the clauses, "with his wife," "with his wife and children," "with his son," "with his daughter." Probably the true solution of the problem is that there was a strain of madness in the tsar which first showed itself in melancholia during a time of seclusion, and then at the end of his reign in some approach to homicidal mania. A cruel, self-willed, passionate tyrant, of great ability, energy, and prowess, successful to a remarkable degree in war, strong and wise in much of his civil government, rigorous in the observances of religion and enforcing the same rigour on those about him, Ivan is one of the most weird characters in all history—a mad genius, doing his worst to ruin the empire he had built up with magnificent ability; a diabolical devotee wading through seas of blood to his untimely prayers.

CHAPTER IV

THE PATRIARCHATE

Books named in Chap. I.; also Peter Mogila, *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*, Eng. trans., c. 1750; *The Patriarch and the Tsar*: the Replies of Nikon (trans. by W. Palmer), 1871; Palmer, *Dissertations on the Orthodox or Eastern Communion*, 1853.

THE reign of Ivan's son, the amiable, feeble Feodor, is noteworthy in Church history as the time when the brief patriarchate of Moscow was established. Hitherto there had been five patriarchs—the patriarchs of Rome, Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem. But Rome was now apostate. Like Matthias who was chosen to fill Judas's vacant place, the patriarch of Moscow was to make up the normal number again. The piety of Feodor is credited with the idea of this daring ecclesiastical innovation; but circumstances had prepared the way for it. The fall of Constantinople and the loss of liberty suffered by its patriarchs under the Turks; the spread of Christianity over Russia and the shifting of the centre of gravity of Oriental Christianity from the Greek to the Sclavonic peoples; the removal of the metropolitan from Kiev to Vladimir, and then his settlement at Moscow, in the very heart of Russia, so far away from Constantinople; the centralising of government in the hands of the tsar and the consequent consolidation of the vast area over which his sway extended; the printing of the Bible and other books in the language of the people; and the Russianising of the Church and exclusion of Greek elements—all these factors combined to render the now merely nominal subjec-

tion of the Church in Russia to the patriarch of Constantinople an anachronism and an inconvenience.

It was under these circumstances that Joachim the patriarch of Antioch paid a visit to the metropolitan Dionysius at Moscow in the year 1580, in order to seek aid for his poverty-stricken people. Dionysius stood on his dignity in giving the benediction to his visitor in the first instance, instead of humbly submitting to the blessing of an ecclesiastical superior and returning it. The tsar then proposed to his boyars the suitability of establishing a patriarchate at Moscow, and sent one of them to discuss the question with Joachim, who replied that it was a matter that could only be settled by an œcumenical council, but promised to consult the other patriarchs about it.

Two years later, Jermiah II., the patriarch of Constantinople, followed the example of his brother at Antioch, and came to Moscow on a similar errand. It is painful to see how in both cases the need of pecuniary aid introduces a sordid element into the consideration of the tsar's proposal. The Greeks hoped to gain something by the friendship of Russia, and the Russians were not slow to take advantage of their poverty and weakness. Jeremiah had been imprisoned at Rhodes by the sultan, and, though now at liberty, he found himself in desperate straits when he threw himself on the compassion of his fellow-Christians in Russia. He can hardly be regarded as a free agent. Nevertheless at first he resisted the tsar's proposal. He was an old man and learned, and the chief custodian of the now ossified customs of the Greek Church. So great an innovation must have startled him when he heard of it from his brother prelate, the patriarch of Antioch. But he had had time to think it over since then; and inasmuch as he came to Moscow of his own accord, well knowing what was desired there, he must have been prepared to face the question. He really had no alternative but to yield, and he may have taken a common-sense view of the whole case. After all, the new step was inevitable.

So Jeremiah gave his reluctant consent, and the new patriarchate was established without the œcumenical council which Joachim had said was necessary for the origination of it.

A synod of all the Russian bishops was now summoned at Moscow (A.D. 1587); and this synod submitted three names to the tsar, who at once chose the first of them, the metropolitan Job. The newly appointed patriarch was addressed as "œcumenical lord," and treated with the ceremonial honours so important in the eyes of an oriental court, which were scrupulously equated with those assigned by ancient custom to his guest, the patriarch of Constantinople. But beyond this accession of dignity the patriarch of Moscow had acquired no more real power than had been secured already by the metropolitan. Now, however, Novgorod was able to get its desire. The supremacy of Moscow being assured, there was no longer any objection to having a metropolitan at Novgorod. Accordingly, one of Job's first acts in the patriarchate was to raise the bishop of the northern city to the position of metropolitan; at the same time he made the bishop of Rostoff also a metropolitan. A year or two later the Bulgarian metropolitan Tirnoff, a descendant of the imperial families of the Cantacuzenes and Palæologi, came to Moscow, charged with synodical letters from the three patriarchs of Constantinople, Antioch, and Jerusalem, confirming the appointment of Job as patriarch of Moscow. Thus the new patriarchate was firmly established and duly recognised.

We are now approaching the time known as "the period of troubles." During the disorganisation of the civil government that followed the death of Feodor (A.D. 1598) the Church came to the front as the chief permanent institution of the Russian nation, and the patriarch of Moscow stood out as the one visible centre of unity. In this way the temporary weakness of the tsardom led to the temporary elevation of the patriarchate. We shall see later how the appearance of a strong tsar was followed by the total and final abolition of the patriarchate. Mean-

while, however, the office was rendering good service to the State as well as to the Church.

A fresh attempt was now made to win over Russia by the Church of Rome. This began in the lifetime of Feodor, who had offered himself as a candidate for the kingship of Poland and Lithuania. Sigismund of Sweden was chosen, and he proved himself a zealot for Rome, and roused so fierce an anti-Russian feeling that his people were excited to a sort of crusade, which ultimately issued in the burning and sacking of Moscow. Terrible persecutions of the "orthodox" were perpetrated by the followers of the "union." At an early stage of the conflict the Swedes devastated the lands of the Solovetsky Monastery and some smaller convents. A little later the Khan of the Crimea invaded Russia and besieged Moscow. Then the patriarch Job sent his clergy round the walls chanting litanies and carrying the icon of "our Lady of the Don," after which he had it set up in a tent in the midst of the troops, like the ark in the tabernacle. Feodor, who was showing no energy in the defence of his city, calmly went to bed, assured that the spiritual protection secured by his patriarch would be sufficient. But the real protector of Moscow was Feodor's brother-in-law, Boris Godunoff, the masterful head of the government, who strongly fortified the city and succeeded in driving off the Mongols.

A movement was now sedulously fomented in Little Russia to induce the bishops of that district to consent to union with Rome. It is said that two bishops were got to sign a request to King Sigismund and the pope for the union as though in the name of a synod, on the pretence that it was a petition for new priveleges for the orthodox Church. Hearing of this, Jeremiah the patriarch of Constantinople—who does not appear to have acted as though he had handed over his authority in this region to his brother at Moscow—wrote to the two bishops that he should deprive them of their offices if they yielded to Rome, and other ecclesiastics protested. Then Ignatius, the

leader of the movement, assembled a council at Brest Litovsky, which he opened with a speech in favour of union. Many discussions followed. In the end the metropolitan Michael was gained over, and then he and four bishops signed a synodical letter consenting to union on the terms of the council of Florence, but with the proviso that the discipline and ceremonies of the Eastern Church were to be preserved. Meanwhile the two bishops whose signatures to the earlier document had been obtained by false pretences discovered and exposed the fraud. At the same time a great outcry was raised against the five apostates at Brest. Accordingly a second synod was assembled at this border town. It consisted entirely of the orthodox party. The churches were all in the hands of the party of the union, and the synod had to meet in a private house. The metropolitan refused to answer two summonses to attend. Then the synod pronounced an anathema on him, and also on all the apostate bishops. On the other hand, the Uniats held their synod in a church, where they pronounced their anathema on the orthodox. The result was a schism.

Rome admitted the Uniates on remarkably liberal terms. They were to retain their own ceremonies and even their own form of the creed. All that was required of them was submission to the pope. The Uniats had the upper hand both in Poland and in Lithuania, and they used their power to persecute both the orthodox party and also the protestants who were found in these parts.

The ancient cathedral of St. Sophia of Kiev was taken from the orthodox and held for a time by the Uniats. But the apostate metropolitan did not dare to make it his centre, and he resided in safer quarters at Novgorod. An effort was made to seize the famous Pechersky Monastery; but this failed. Subsequently much of the property of the orthodox monasteries was sequestrated, and Dominican convents were established in various parts of the country. This extraordinary condition of affairs, in which no orthodox bishops were appointed for Little Russia, went on for over twenty years.

The disorders that next afflicted Russia were occasioned by one of the most amazingly successful impostures ever known to history. A pretender personated young Prince Dmitri, a son of Ivan the Terrible, who had died, probably murdered, some years before. This clever man was able to fight his way to Moscow and to reign there for some troublous years as Tsar of Russia. In the civil war thus occasioned the Church was seriously affected, and monks and bishops were directly involved. One man in particular now comes to the front, both on account of his vigorous activity at the time, and because his name has become famous in the light of subsequent history. This is Philaret Romanoff, the ancestor of the now reigning imperial family of Russia. The house of Ruric, the founder of the Russian princedom at Kiev, became extinct at the death of Dmitri. The new family of tsars was not yet in evidence. But during the time of confusion that intervened, its first known ancestor was already a person of importance in national and ecclesiastical affairs. Philaret was metropolitan of Rostoff. When the city was attacked by the pretender's party, most of the inhabitants fled; but the bishop held his ground, shut himself up in his cathedral with those who refused to desert him, and there celebrated the liturgy as usual. The rebels broke in, to find him preaching to his people. They seized hold of Philaret, tore off his episcopal robes, and dragged him out of the place, half dead from their violent handling. At Moscow the Trinity laura became a citadel of defence and supported a siege of sixteen months, when attacked, it is said, by an army of 80,000 men with sixty cannons pouring shot on its walls and churches. On the side of the monastery eight hundred men fell; but still the place held out. Twice it supplied Moscow itself with food. So wonderful an endurance was only accounted for by the protecting presence of two saints, Sergius and Nicon, who were believed to appear to the valiant defenders in visions or dreams. This monastery was now the heart of the defence of Russia against an impudent, lying usurpation. At the same time the patriarch Hermogenes was

exerting all his influence to check the imposture. To add to the miseries of the time, the Poles ravaged the country, and seized and burnt its capital, deposed Hermogenes, and imprisoned him in a monastery, where he was starved to death (A.D. 1612). The Greek Ignatius, a follower of the pseudo-Dmitri, was now set up as patriarch of Russia. Meanwhile the monks and their supporters in the Trinity Monastery still held out. At length its devoted patriotism and loyalty to its Church were rewarded. Gradually the infection of heroism spread. A fast of purification was observed all over Russia. The new spirit now awakening in the people infused itself into an army of rescue. The Poles were defeated; the Kremlin was captured; and Philaret's young son Michael was elected tsar in the Trinity Monastery (A.D. 1613).

The new tsar showed his gratitude to the Church and his appreciation of its support by uniting a council of bishops to the council of the boyars. In this way the Church was represented in the government of Russia as it is in that of England by the presence of the bishops in the House of Lords. Much against his will, Philaret, now old and worn with the hardships he had endured, was elected patriarch; and thus father and son stood at the head of Church and State as patriarch and tsar. The two together effected several important administrative reforms both in civil and in ecclesiastical affairs. Centralisation was aimed at throughout. Courts were established at Moscow for trying affairs concerning the provincial towns, and even the governors were made subject to these courts. Similarly the archimandrites of the monasteries and the priests and deacons and other clerical officers were put under the jurisdiction of the patriarch in all except capital cases. On the other hand, Michael confirmed his father's edict forbidding the monasteries to acquire any more real property. By this time a large part of the land of Russia had come into the hands of the monks. The growth of the Church is seen in the continual increase in the number of dioceses. One addition, the bishopric of Astrachan, organised earlier,

was a sign of the extension of Russia in Asia that was now going on. Two dioceses in Tobolsk and Siberia were added (A.D. 1623). Philaret prepared a new *Trebuik*, or book of ritual,[1] and other service books.

Modern Western scholarship was now gradually trickling into Russia, though only in slender rills, which left the greater part of the empire intellectually dry and barren. The most prominent leader in this movement was Peter Mogila. He had been educated at the university of Paris, had served as a distinguished soldier in the Polish war, and had subsequently taken the tonsure and retired to the Pechersky Monastery, of which in course of time he was made archimandrite. No sooner was Mogila in charge of this great monastery than he established a school, from which he sent the more promising students to universities in Western Europe. Cyril Lucar took note of his intellectual activity and appointed him exarch of his See. Peter Mogila was more competent to appreciate the various aspects of the age-long controversy with Rome than any previous defenders of orthodoxy had been. He had a printing press, from which he issued editions of the Fathers, and service books carefully edited in the interest of orthodoxy, in order to counteract the service books circulated by the Uniats. This is a curious feature of the polemics of the Russian Church and most significant of the importance attached to ritual. Very few people could read; sermons were rarely preached. Apart from the schools, which could not have been numerous, most of the people got their religious instruction from the contemplation of pictures and from attendance at the services. The icons were worshipped as mere fetishes; still, to thoughtful people many of them conveyed historical and allegorical lessons. Then the ritual was all symbolical, and the words of the service books embodied the dogmas of the faith. For most people these were the only verbal or literary

[1] The *Trebuik* is like the Roman ritual, a book directing the rites for all the sacraments except the communion, which is regulated by the ritual of the *Liturgy*, corresponding to the Roman mass.

presentations of orthodoxy. Accordingly both parties manipulated them for their own purposes. The Uniats altered them so as to favour Roman Catholicism, and the orthodox ruled out these innovations and brought them more into line with the authorised teaching of the Eastern Church. But Peter Mogila did more than this. He broke the silence of centuries which had brooded over the ice-bound sea of Greek theology, and published a Confession of Faith, which was written partly by himself and partly under his direction by the archimandrite Isaiah Trophinio-vich. It was subsequently revised by Meletius Syriga, and in its newer form it passed into the Russian Church proper, where it is still acknowledged as a standard authority. This catechism was not only intended to defend the orthodoxy of the Church against Roman errors; it was also issued as a safeguard against Calvinism, which was now penetrating into Poland and Little Russia.

In the year 1643 there was held a synod at Jassy in Moldavia, which condemned the doctrines of Calvinism. Peter Mogila and four Russian bishops signed the acts of this synod. Thus, while as the most learned prominent theologian of his country Mogila took the lead in the campaign against Romanism, he was equally decided in his opposition to Protestantism. He was not drawn into the tentative alliance between the two great opposing forces that were contending with the papacy, which might have become a mighty force changing the current of the history of Christendom, if Cyril Lucar's large-minded liberal policy had been pursued. The Russian Church has never been liberal. More than once reforming itself in morals and discipline, it is intensely conservative in doctrine and ritual. Thus its literature is almost wholly devoted to apologetics and liturgiology. Scholarship, not speculation, characterises its most intellectual leaders.

There are many instances of great scholarship among the Russian ecclesiastics. Thus Philaret's successor Joseph was celebrated for his learning, and Michael conferred with him and the bishops in regard to a project for

a common codification of civil and ecclesiastical law. This great work was carried out, however, by boyars and ministers of State.

By far the most famous of all the patriarchs of Moscow is Nicon, who followed Joseph after an interval. His long life extends over the whole of the patriarchal period. He was born before the first patriarch was appointed; and he lived to see the patriarchate superseded by the Holy Synod. The child of a peasant home at Nijgorod, he learned to read the Scriptures in early life, and he was so moved by them that he resolved to devote himself to the service of God. Following the custom of his age and Church, he understood this to mean becoming a monk. He left home secretly, and was about to commence his novitiate in the monastery of Jeltovodsky. But his father discovered him and persuaded him to return home, marry, and become a priest. It was against his own judgment, and he afterwards took the death of all his children as a call to return to his earlier aims. Nicon now induced his wife to enter a convent, and he himself retreated to the distant northern monastery of Solovetsky. After a time he sought still deeper seclusion in an island hermitage amid the ice of the White Sea. In the year 1646 he submitted to the urgent entreaty of the monks of Kojeozersky, and was appointed to the headship of their monastery. This position following on the fame of his asceticism led to his being regarded as a leader of the Church, and he had to visit Moscow in connection with ecclesiastical affairs (A.D. 1649). There he came under the notice of the new tsar. Michael had died in the year before Nicon's appointment to Kojeozersky and had been succeeded by his son Alexis (A.D. 1645), an intelligent, if not a strong ruler, anxious to promote moral reform, Western culture, and general progress. Attracted by the noble bearing and vigorous eloquence of Nicon, Alexis appointed him archimandrite of the Novospassky Monastery, where the members of the Romanoff family were buried. He was now brought into frequent contact with the tsar, who came to

lean upon his advice in regard to matters of State as well as in ecclesiastical business. Three years later Alexis made him metropolitan of Novgorod, and he then had the exceptional honour of being consecrated by the patriarch of Jerusalem, who happened to be in Russia at the time on one of the begging expeditions to which the once venerated chief bishops of the Greek Church were compelled to humiliate themselves.

Nicon was now entrusted with great power. For instance, he had the right to enter the prisons, hear the prisoners' complaints, and if he thought them innocent, order their release; so that his position in this respect was something like that of the English Home Secretary. He proved his heroism during a riot, when he faced the mob and was knocked down and left for dead in the square at Novgorod. Helped up by his assistants, he persisted in penetrating to the most dangerous part of the city, walking in procession with the cross, and actually entered the building where the rebels were assembled. Struck with admiration for his intrepidity, they did not molest him any more. The rebellion went on for a time. But at last Nicon was able to quell it by his personal influence.

In matters of religion Nicon was also felt to be a great leader. Preaching was now almost extinct in the Russian Church. Dreary homilies prescribed by authority and monotonously read took the place of real sermons. The services consisted for the most part of the chanting of long archaic liturgies on the part of the priests, unintelligible to a later generation, or genuflections and prostrations by the congregation. Nicon revived the practice of preaching. His sermons were scriptural in teaching and full of life and power. Crowds gathered to hear him, and felt the spell of his eloquence. We may regard him as the Chrysostom of the Russian Church. Nicon also reformed the order of the liturgical service, which had drifted into confusion, and improved the singing arrangements after the model of the Greek chanting.

Saint worship was as characteristic of the Russian

Church as of the Roman—perhaps more so. Advised by Nicon, Alexis convoked a solemn synod in honour of the three dead prelates—Job, Hermogenes, and Philip—with the object of bringing their remains to the church of the Assumption. Nicon himself went to the remote Solovetsky Monastery to fetch the body of the martyred Philip, who was addressed as though living, in an appeal from the tsar that he would come to Moscow and absolve the spirit of Ivan who was buried there. A more curious embassy was never despatched. It was directed to the spirit of the saint which was thought to be accessible at the place where his bones were lying; he was requested to grant permission for their removal; with them he would come himself. The spirit of the old mad tsar was also supposed to haunt his own mouldering remains. Therefore, of course, the martyr could bring relief to the lost soul by the coming of his body into the place where Ivan's body was buried. This is an application of the ideas of relic worship that exceeds all precedents. It illustrates the character of the Russian religion of the seventeenth century in the person of one of the most enlightened of rulers. Then what must that religion have meant to ignorant peasants, villagers living in remote regions of the vast empire, cut off from the metropolis by wolf-scoured forests?

In the year 1653, after long resisting the entreaties of Alexis, Nicon accepted the position of patriarch of Moscow, which had been vacant for some time, since the death of his predecessor Joseph. We cannot always penetrate to the motives which lie behind the traditional *nolo episcopari*; but in the present case we can see that, quite apart from any ascetic abnegation of ambition, Nicon would perceive the serious difficulties of the position offered to him. Two sections of the community were already opposed to him—the ecclesiastics who resented his disciplinary reforms, and the boyars who were jealous of the imperial favouritism that he enjoyed. But no sooner were his objections overborne by the entreaties of his friend and master the tsar, than Nicon threw himself into the duties

of his exalted position with his customary fearless energy. In the first place, he revised the service books. It has been considered that his most important reform in this matter was a correction of the position of the fingers in the benediction. According to the Greek posture—which differs from the Latin—the ring finger is bent so as to touch the thumb and thus represent X for "Christ,"[1] and also for the cross, while the first finger being upright and the second a little curved, those fingers perhaps represent I C, the initial and final letters of "Jesus."[2] So great importance was attached to this symbolism, that irregularities in regard to it were severely punished. On the other hand, Nicon's discipline in dealing with the prevalent laxity of finger posture increased the number of his enemies. To us his literary emendations may be more interesting. Alexis took the greatest interest in a revision of the Sclavonic version of the Bible. This was carried out under the directions of Nicon, who got five hundred manuscripts of the Scriptures and other books from Mount Athos for the correction of the text, which had become very corrupt.[3] Nicon's revisions of service books and Bible were confirmed at a synod of Greek bishops convoked by Paisius the patriarch of Constantinople. In sending this decision to Nicon, Paisius urged him to preserve the unity of the orthodox Church under the five patriarchs of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Moscow, but at the same time begged him to be indulgent to those who erred in unimportant matters. Unhappily this was not Nicon's way. He is grand when showing fearless independence in opposition to a mob, and strong and bold

[1] Χριστός.

[2] Ἰησοῦς. In the Latin benediction the thumb and the first two fingers are held upright, while the third and fourth fingers are bent.

[3] One of the most important Sclavonic MSS. of the Gospels is the Ostromir Codex written by Gregory, a deacon of Novgorod, and dating from the year 1056–57. The earliest dated complete Sclavonic MS. of the Gospels now known is assigned to the year 1144, and the earliest MS. of the whole Bible to the year 1499. The first printed edition is the famous Ostrog Bible of A.D. 1581. See Scrivener, *Criticism of the N.T.*, 4th edit. (edited by P. Miller), vol. ii. pp. 158–161.

in carrying out his purging of the Church against all opposition; but the temperament which favours such virile virtues is not so ready to cultivate the graces of tolerance and gentleness, and Nicon was a stern ecclesiastic. Even his admirer Mouravieff admits that his "ardent zeal for eradicating all that was evil in the Church carried him beyond the bounds which pastoral long-suffering might have observed." [1]

The first revised work to be printed was the *Slonjebuik* or service book, which was followed by the *Skreejál* ("The Table"), a patristic catena of doctrines. The revision was not left to make its way on its merits. The old MSS. of the corrupt text were violently taken from the monasteries, where they had been used for years, and the revised versions forcibly substituted. Naturally such high-handed acts roused fierce resentment among the ignorant, conservative monks. The result was a schism which issued in the large sect of the *Staro-Obriadtsi*, or *Raskolniks*, who have suffered much persecution for their adhesion to the old books.

But while Nicon was severe in the discipline of the Church, he showed a large-minded tactfulness in dealing with foreign affairs. During his patriarchate Little Russia was united with the Church and empire after a war with the Poles. The movement from within was led by Kmeltnitsky, the "Hetman," who asked the army whether they would belong "to the unbelieving khan (the sultan), to the Latin king, or to the orthodox tsar?" He saw and he made the men see that independence was impossible. Faced by this dilemma, they shouted, "We wish to be under the orthodox tsar."

It was more difficult to secure ecclesiastical submission. The metropolitan of Kiev and the archimandrite of the Pechersky Monastery had no inclination to exchange a merely nominal subordination to Constantinople for a very real submission to Moscow with its masterful prelate. But Nicon's flattering reception of the delegates from

[1] *History*, p. 206.

these two ecclesiastics and the presents he sent back with them molified their resentment against the policy of the government; and although the union was not actually effected at once, it came about some thirty years later. Thus at last, after centuries of alienation, Kiev, the venerable parent city of Christianity in Russia, was reunited to the national Church to which it had given birth. This happy result, springing from the diplomatic skill of Nicon, delighted the tsar. In another way he greatly pleased Alexis. When Moscow was devastated by the plague, the patriarch bestirred himself to improve the sanitation of the place, and took personal care of the royal family. For these services the tsar bestowed on him the title of "Great Lord."

Meanwhile Nicon's severity of discipline increased his unpopularity among the clergy. He punished intemperate popes with flogging and imprisonment—customary modes of chastisement at the time; and he insisted on some degree of education in candidates for ordination, the minimum being ability to read and write. Then the boyars' jealousy led to plots and intrigues, which produced such an intolerable situation, that Nicon, being on one occasion reproached for his pride by one of the princes, broke out into a rage, declared that he was no longer patriarch, and tore off his episcopal robes. Dressed in the simple garments of a monk, he retired to the Krestnoy Monastery, near the White Sea. He now became gloomy and bitter in spirit, anathematising one after another of his enemies. A little later, on the invitation of one of the boyars who was friendly to him, he made a secret journey to Moscow, suddenly presented himself in the Church of the Assumption, resumed the patriarch's robe and staff of office, and conducted the liturgy. Here was a dramatic surprise for prince and people. The boyars persuaded the mild Alexis, who was powerless in their hands, not to receive his old friend in his palace. The situation became intolerable, and a council was summoned to deal with it. This was the most imposing Church council ever held in

Russia. The patriarchs of Antioch and Alexandria were there as well as Russian metropolitans and bishops. Nicon came in his patriarchal robes. At the sight of the great man summoned as a defendant, Alexis burst into tears. But the tsar was impotent to save his old friend. A variety of charges were brought against him, consisting in the main of accusations of arbitrary, tyrannical dealings with the Church, on the ground of which he was formally deposed, stripped of his robes, and sent as a prisoner to a monastery at Bielo-ozero.

Nicon lived to see the end of the patriarchate and the establishment of the Holy Synod under Peter the Great. He may have owed his fall from power in a measure to his own harshness; but he had been a great ecclesiastic and a great statesman, correcting abuses in the Church and helping to establish the unity and power of the nation. He has been called the Russian Thomas à Becket,[1] a comparison that does not do justice to his merits.

[1] Leroy Beaulieu, *The Empire of the Tsars*, part iii. p. 154.

CHAPTER V

PETER THE GREAT AND THE HOLY SYNOD

Morfill ; Rambaud ; Leroy Beaulieu ; Nicolas Polevoy, *History of Peter the Great* ; Torudin, *The Roman Pope and the Eastern Popes* ; Schuler, *Peter the Great, Emperor of Russia*, New York, 1884 ; Merejkowski, *Peter and Alexis* (a well-informed historical novel).

ALEXIS died in the year 1676 at the age of forty-seven, and was succeeded by his eldest son Feodor, a young man of weak health, who reigned without distinction for six years, and died without an heir. Sophia, the daughter of Alexis, a handsome, clever woman, then contrived to have herself proclaimed regent for her imbecile brother Ivan and her young half-brother Peter, a child of Alexis by a second wife, born in the year 1672, and therefore four years of age when his father died. Peter was an intelligent, keenly observant child. But by the cruel policy of Sophia and the able but unpopular minister Basil Golitsin, who was as her right hand, his education was deliberately neglected. The object of this cruel injustice was to keep him permanently unfit to administer the government of the State, so that they might continue to share it between them. It was a diabolically subtle policy. But it failed utterly. At the age of seventeen Peter seized the reins and sent his unnatural sister off to a convent, where she died after seventeen years' imprisonment. Much of the brutality and coarseness of the great tsar's subsequent conduct must be set down to the account of his deliberately neglected youth. His life-story would have been very different in many respects if it had not been for the iniquitous dis-

advantages with which he set out. If it is a crime to steal the bread from a child's mouth, it is scarcely less a crime to deprive him of the education that is his natural right; and this is the charge that must be laid to the account of the ambitious regent and her unscrupulous minister.

With the commencement of the reign of Peter the Great we enter on the modern history of Russia. The events noticed in the immediately preceding chapters will have disproved the popular notion that Russia was ever entirely isolated and dissevered from the comity of European nations, excepting during the dismal three centuries of the Mongol possession. Previous to that time she had been in close contact with Constantinople. Both in Church and in State at the great centres of Kiev and Novgorod Russian civilisation had been in line with the civilisation of Eastern Europe. In some respects it was even more advanced than that of Western Europe at the break-up of the Roman Empire and during the wars of the barons. The Mongol invasion had swept much of this culture away, checked the course of national development, shut off the Sclavonic population from Greek and Teutonic Europe, and turned Russia into a semi-Asiatic country. It took many generations for her people to recover from so huge and crushing a calamity. The vastness of the territory of Russia, the thinness of its widely scattered populations, and the remoteness of most of them from the centres of enlightenment, have always resulted and must still result in great differences in the social conditions of the people. Necessarily the mass of the outlying peasants are only indirectly affected, if at all influenced, by the advance of culture in the towns. Religiously as well as socially, most of Russia is still in the Middle Ages, that is to say, in the period before the Renaissance.

But in Moscow, Rostoff, Novgorod, and other great towns there was a consciousness of the larger world long before Peter came on the scene. Ivan the Terrible took decided steps towards bringing Western culture into Russia. The Romanoff dynasty followed on similar lines.

The gentle Alexis was anxious to import education and enlightened manners into his empire. Still, when all that was done in this way has received due recognition, it remains true that Peter the Great achieved the huge twofold task of restoring Russia to Europe and introducing Europe to Russia. His clear ideas and his vigorous pursuit of them went far beyond anything accomplished or even attempted or conceived by his predecessors in these directions. He aimed at modernising Russia by bringing her into contact with the progressive nations of the West, and in a considerable degree he succeeded, though by no means to the extent that external appearances would suggest. We might compare Russia in the time of Peter with Japan in our own day. In both cases we have a long-stagnant people suddenly stirred and roused by a rush of life from the progressive West. But the immediate effect is much greater in Japan than it was in Russia. Whether the permanent results will be equally to the advantage of the yellow race remains to be seen.

Peter was always fond of mechanical contrivances, and it was quite congenial to him to work side by side with the artisans in the dockyard at Deptford when he came over to England to learn shipbuilding. Neither his education nor his manners were beyond the standard of an English working-man of his day. But he had a great intellect and an indomitable will, and it was much to him that neither were warped or prejudiced by the conventions of the schools. Even more than Napoleon, Peter, though the son of an emperor, was really a self-made man. His European travels and the mechanical labour that so scandalised his courtiers had their place in his deliberate policy. Peter visited dockyards to learn shipbuilding, because he saw that Russia needed a navy if she was to hold her own on the Baltic. For the same reason he founded his new capital close to this sea (A.D. 1703). But he had greater ideas and wider projects than those of naval defence or offence. Moscow was buried deep in the heart of Russia. Before the age of railways this metropolis was

quite out of touch with foreign countries. Now it was the design of Peter the Great to bring his country into vital contact with the rest of Europe. The founding of St. Petersburg was one important step in this direction. With herculean energy he did all that one man could do by his own action to introduce the ideas and arts of the advancing nations to his benighted subjects. Many influences from the West flowed into Russia when Peter opened the door. Englishmen and Germans especially came in great numbers, spreading commerce and scientific education among the people of the towns.

These novelties were not brought about without opposition. While Peter was on his travels he heard of a dangerous revolt of the Streltsi, the choicest imperial troops, the Russian "prætorian guard." The tsar hurried back, suppressed the insurrection, and punished the rebels with savage cruelty. The old Nationalist party called Peter "the foreign tsar," and his followers "the Germans." Nevertheless he did not swerve from his purpose. He was convinced that this was for the good of his people. Paternal government is of the essence of tsardom, and since Peter was by far the ablest man in the country, head and shoulders above his people, he felt justified in treating them as children. So we have the paradox of an uneducated man spreading new ideas and laying the foundations of civilisation and culture in a great nation. In all this Peter was thoroughly patriotic. There was no ground for any suspicion like that which sprang up in England when Queen Mary wished to introduce Philip's Spaniards to high places in the Church. The English, the Germans, the Dutch might come as teachers and traders to bring knowledge and wealth to Russia; but none of them were appointed to posts of honour. Peter's ministers and officials in high positions were all born Russians.

The great tsar thoroughly reorganised his empire in military, social, and religious affairs. He dissolved the mutinous Streltsi, and raised a regular army of over 200,000 men. Thus he strengthened the autocracy by increasing

its military power. This had an influence on all departments of State. Peter's idea was the establishment of an elaborate, unified organisation. Everybody was to serve the State—some in the army, others in the Church, the rest by payment of taxes. He introduced important changes into the social order. No doubt these were not all improvements. In place of the old custom of equal inheritance, Peter initiated the German law of primogeniture; and the peasants lost power and rights by becoming parts of a great territorial system. But in one important matter Peter brought about a great reform. This was in the emancipation of woman. Hitherto the women of Russia had been kept in Oriental seclusion and subjection, partly owing to old Byzantine influences, partly also owing to the effect of the long Mongolian dominance. The tsar had seen the very different position of woman in the West, and he aimed at giving similar freedom and similar rights to the women of his empire. He ordered that betrothal should take place six weeks before marriage, with a right to break the contract during the interval. Parents and guardians were compelled to swear that they were not making their young people marry against their will, and masters to do the same in the marriage of their slaves. Midwives were forbidden to make away with illegitimate children. Then there were reforms in other directions. Thus the *praviozli*, or public flogging of debtors, was stopped. Peter allowed domestic serfs to enter the army even without the consent of their masters, and he permitted those who had gained some money by trade to enrol themselves as citizens of the towns where they lived —also without their masters' consent. He ordered the Senate to prohibit the sale of peasants apart from the land.[1]

One of Peter's changes brought Russia into line with the rest of Europe in a very significant way. The old Russian calendar had been dated from "the creation of the world," and the old Russian year had begun in September.

[1] Morfill, p. 343.

Peter reckoned by the Christian era; the year was to begin in January, as with us.[1]

But some of Peter's imitations of the West were beyond the manners of his people. He introduced the "assembly," in which European costume was to be worn; but it was "only a parody of Versailles."[2] Visitors from the West observed that men smoked in the presence of ladies, and that frequently noble cavaliers had to be taken out drunk.

Peter also introduced reforms into the government of the Church. The most important of these innovations was the substitution of the Holy Synod for the patriarchate. The patriarch Adrien, who had shown little sympathy with the new ideas imported from the West, died in the year 1700. Peter did not appoint any successor. He conferred on Stephen Javorski the title of "custodian of the patriarchal throne," while he was arranging for a new form of ecclesiastical government.

Later on he organised the Holy Synod[3] for the supreme government of the Russian Church. The synod takes the place of the patriarch. It consists of bishops and priests nominated by the tsar and presided over by a State official, called the "High Procurator," a layman, whom Peter preferred to be a military officer, representing the tsar. The procurator is popularly known as "the eye of the tsar." Formerly the inferior clergy were in a majority; but now they are outnumbered by the bishops. The synod sits at St. Petersburg; it has delegates in Moscow and elsewhere. It is sometimes said that the tsar is the head of the Russian Church. This is true enough in fact, for the autocracy comprehends the Church as well as the State. But it is not allowed in theory, nor is it recognised in the forms of ecclesiastical order. The Oriental

[1] This must not be confounded with the question of "Old Style." The "Old Style" (*i.e.* the Julian year) still continued uncorrected in Russia, and is now twelve days behind the corrected year of Europe.

[2] Rambaud, p. 386.

[3] Its full title is "The Most Holy Governing Synod."

Church protests against the Roman papacy; it cannot set up a papacy of its own, which in one respect would be even more scandalous, since the pope is a bishop, but the tsar a layman. The Russian Church is not built on the theory invented by Henry VIII., and thoroughly lived up to by the imperious Elizabeth—that the king is the real head of the Church and as such master of the bishops. It agrees with thoroughgoing Protestantism in maintaining that only Christ is the Head of the Church, and it does not allow that He has any earthly vicar. Under Christ the synod is supposed to rule independently. This is the decent fiction.

The establishment of the Holy Synod was justified by Peter on the precedent of the ancient Church councils. He maintained that he was reverting to precedent in having his Church governed by a council. But of course the mere revival of archæology was the very last thing the daring, innovating tsar was likely to promote. Peter issued an ecclesiastical code which was wholly utilitarian in character. He rode rough-shod over customs and precedents that did not favour his aims. With the tsar theories counted for nothing; practical considerations were all he thought of. He argued that government by a council was better than autocratic authority, because it obviated the danger of tyranny—wilfully blind to the application of the same principle to his own position as autocrat. But he could not endure the rivalry of a patriarch. He had the warning example of Nicon before his eyes. Peter would give no second Nicon his chance.[1] Therefore, while the abolition of the patriarch was ostensibly an action in favour of liberty, it was really one that crippled

[1] In his preamble to the order establishing the synod, Peter says: "The collegiate organisation would not bring on the country the troubles and seditions which could survive where there is one man only who is found at the head of the Church. . . . The people would not see the difference between the spiritual and the temporal powers. . . . Struck with the virtue and splendour of the pastor of the supreme Church, they imagine that he is a second sovereign, equal in power to the autocrat and even superior." See Rambaud, p. 392.

the independence of the Church and brought it into subjection to the State. The masterful tsar would not allow a Church which was as a second state within the State; therefore he made the Church a department of his State.

Peter's high-handed dealings with the Church were only submitted to by his bishops with bitter resentment. The new system was endorsed by the patriarchs of the other parts of the orthodox Church. But we must not forget that these dignitaries were in the miserable condition of subjects of the Turkish Empire among a poverty-stricken people, largely dependent on the bounty of the tsar for the supply of their necessities.

Peter accused his bishops of pride, and bade them conduct themselves more humbly. He ordered them to have schools in which the children of the popes were to be educated. Any who were not thus educated were to be drafted into the army. It was compulsory education under penalty of conscription. The sons of the nobles were also to attend the bishops' schools. The tsar was anxious to spread popular education; he had schools established for this purpose in every province of his empire, the masters of which were furnished from his mathematical school at St. Petersburg. He also established special naval and engineering colleges. But the people were not ripe for these improvements, and even Peter's herculean efforts left Russia as a whole still far behind the rest of Europe.

Such wholesale innovations forced upon a conservative people by authority could not but arouse opposition, which would look for an opportunity to express itself. The priests were obstinate opponents of the whole movement. No doubt Peter's knowledge that they would take up this attitude was one of the motives leading him to suppress the patriarchate and bring the Church more effectually under his own power. But that in turn provoked resentment and led to counter-plots. It is in the light of this condition of affairs that we must regard the saddest scene in the life of the tsar, the execution of

his son Alexis. This unhappy prince had incurred the displeasure of his father by giving way to dissolute habits. Then he had followed the not uncommon example of an heir-apparent, and sided with the opposition. He had even done much worse. He had intrigued with Sweden against his father's government, though as he believed in the true interest of his country. In his opposition to the new methods of government he was aided by his mother Eudoxia, Peter's first wife, whom the tsar had treated with heartless brutality and sent to a convent. She had converted the convent into a court, where she welcomed the disaffected, for Eudoxia was the patroness of the priests' party. Alexis is reported to have said, "I will whisper a word to the bishops. They will pass it on to the priests; who will repeat it to the people, and everything will be as it was before."[1]

The treason was intolerable and unpardonable. Eudoxia was sent to another convent, where she was kept in strict confinement, and the tsarevitch was tried, condemned, flogged, and executed—probably by the knout. Peter was certainly responsible for the torture and death of his son Alexis. It was an act of deliberate policy. As such it is not comparable with Ivan the Terrible's dreadful deed when he struck his son dead with his own hand in a fit of mad rage. But the whole story is a mournful tragedy. Weak and dissolute as he was, Alexis was led to believe that his father's policy was ruinous to the State and impious with regard to the Church. On the other hand, Peter saw in his son, the heir to his throne, a wretched opponent of the reforms to which he was devoting his titanic energies. The great tsar believed in those reforms with all his heart as necessary for the well-being of his country. Then how could he permit them to be thus traitorously checked and thwarted, with the certainty that when he died they would all be swept away? We may pity Peter as much as we pity poor Alexis.

[1] Leroy Beaulieu, part iii. p. 158.

Peter felt the monks to be the worst enemies of his reforms, and he saw the institution of monasticism to be socially harmful in two ways: the monasteries held a large part of the land of Russia, and the monks were rich in the midst of the poverty of the peasants. Russia was suffering, as the Roman Empire had suffered in its later days, by the withdrawal of so many able-bodied men from the service of their country. The tsar did not venture to deal directly with the first of these evils. He did not dare to confiscate Church land. But he made some attempt to lessen the second by not permitting anybody to become a monk under the age of thirty. Then he crippled the power of the monasteries by restricting their literary influence. He forbade monks to have ink or pens in their cells. Men were not to shut themselves up to write; they were to work at trades. On the other hand, Peter encouraged the literary activity of bishops, and in his reign Dmitri Touptalo, the metropolitan of Rostoff, re-edited the *Menologium* (the Lives of the Saints) and wrote theological works of his own. Other writers of less account also flourished in the hothouse atmosphere of an exotic culture which Peter had introduced into Russia.

It must not be supposed that Peter's masterfulness led him into narrow intolerance. The *raison d'être* of his policy was rationalistic liberalism. He was in constant opposition to the prevalent inert conservatism of Russian life and religion. Accordingly we may be prepared to see in him a certain amount of indifference to varieties of religious belief, and this was the case. He did not interfere with the greater part of the sect of the Raskolniks,[1] who lived in the remote forests. He would protect the peaceable schismatics from popular persecution. "God has given the tsars power over the nations," he said, "but Christ alone has power over the conscience of men."[2] But he imposed on those members of the sect who lived at Moscow a double capitation tax, and required them to

[1] See pp. 441 ff.

[2] Rambaud, p. 394.

wear distinctive clothing. They must pay for the liberty of nonconformity; they must live as marked men. Peter did not disguise his opinion that their position was an error, and he treated it as such. He prohibited them from propagating their views with threats of a penalty. Attendance at church every Sunday and at the Easter communion was made obligatory.

The tsar protected the Capuchins at Astrakan, because, as Voltaire remarked, these monks were of no consequence; but in the year 1718 he expelled the Jesuits from Russia as dangerous politicians. Although he was particularly friendly with the Dutch and the English, he persecuted his own Protestants. For instance, a Russian Protestant lady, Natasia Zima, was conducted with her husband and six other converts to "the terrible chancelry" and there cruelly tortured.[1]

Peter the Great died in the year 1725 at the age of fifty-three. He had compressed an enormous amount of work into his comparatively short life. He found Russia remote from the world's progress, sunk in mediæval barbarism, more Oriental than Western in life and manners. Solely owing to his own energy, against the wishes and feelings of most of his people, before his death he had the satisfaction of seeing his country in vital relations with the rest of Europe and on the road to progress. His schools and colleges, libraries and museums, galleries of painting and sculpture, only touched the few; his canals and his ships brought fresh life and new energy to a larger number of his subjects. Peter cared nothing for pomp and state, had no personal dignity, no manners. He was tyrannous, cruel, coarse, gluttonous. His practical jokes were those of a rude schoolboy. On the other hand, his scorn of old-fashioned proprieties had its good points. Quite indifferent to the opinion of the orthodox, he would freely visit heretics and stand godfather to their children. Perhaps his chief claim to honour, next to the throwing open of his country to Europe, is his zeal for education.

[1] Rambaud, p. 394.

This is seen especially in ecclesiastical matters. Peter aimed at giving some culture to the grossly ignorant parish clergy. But his autocratic dealings with the Church paralysed its energy. From this time onwards there is little to chronicle in Russian ecclesiastical affairs. The sects will become active and interesting, but the orthodox Church ever more and more somnolent. "The Church," writes M. Leroy Beaulieu, "has come to be considered a sort of adjunct to the police, and the religious practices as police regulations."[1] Therefore in thinking of the Church in Russia as it has settled down subsequently to the establishment of the Holy Synod by Peter the Great, with the virtual absorption of its official life into that of the bureaucracy, we must entirely dismiss from our minds the ideas of the relations of pastor and people seen in England and America, or that of the French curé or the Irish priest and his flock. The village pope is miserably poor, and he has to maintain a bare livelihood by taking his dues from the peasants, who resent his visits as the calls of a tax-gatherer. They do not look up to him as a religious leader. He is a functionary who has to perform certain rites. He rarely preaches, and he must never do so until he has submitted his sermon to the judgment of an ecclesiastical superior. Nobody expects him to be a model of higher living than is customary among his neighbours. We have seen that while the bishops are celibates and are found in the monasteries, the parish priests or popes must be married men. A priest must marry before he can be ordained. If his wife dies he may not marry again. But neither should he continue in office as a widower. He should resign at once, and retire to a monastery. Recently, however, this requirement has been relaxed, and there are now some widowed priests in Russia. As a rule, it appears, his bishop finds a wife for the young postulant of priesthood. This curious custom has sprung out of the bishop's responsibility for his priests and their families. The

[1] *The Empire of the Tsars*, part iii, p. 139.

salary of a village pope allows him no means for saving. But when he dies his wife and family are not to be left destitute, and the bishop has them on his hands. The easiest way to provide for them is to pass them on to the deceased man's successor by giving him one of the daughters for his wife.[1] The result is that the priests have become a caste. The office is hereditary in a sort of Levitical tribe. The position of a country pope is very anomalous and most unsatisfactory. He feels himself above the peasants, and his wife affects the dress of Western Europe; but he is not received into society, and in this respect he is very differently situated from the English clergyman. "I know he gets drunk once in a while," said a peasant of his pope, "but he is a good Christian, and he is never drunk on Saturday night or Sunday morning."[2]

It must be allowed that not only is the orthodox Church in Russia intellectually inert; it is a hindrance rather than a help to the national development. Its functions are ceremonial, not spiritual. The people attend the liturgy as by law required; but they do not understand the old Sclavonic dialect of the service books. There is no idea in the Russian Church corresponding to that of the Roman Church where the priest says mass regardless of the attendance of the laity. The liturgy is supposed to be congregational; the laity must be present. Yet the people who stand through the weary hours of the lengthy ritual do not know the meaning of the words chanted in their hearing. This is a result of the pedantry of archaism that has fossilised the Church, for the Greek liturgies of St. Basil and St. Chrysostom were originally translated into Sclavonic for the express purpose of being understood by the congregations who took part in them. With the ignorant peasant, bowing to icons is the chief religious performance. Icons are in every house, in every room of every house. On entering a room a Russian looks

[1] See Wallace, *Russia* (new and enlarged edit.), vol. i. pp. 64–89.

[2] Leroy Beaulieu, part iii. p. 246.

at the icon hung in the corner facing him, and bows to it. That is his primary religious duty.

As in Ireland, commercial and educational progress is hindered in Russia by the multitude of saints' days. The *dies nefas*, when work is tabooed, becomes a serious handicap in the race of modern life. These saints' days together with the Sundays rob the Russian of nearly one-third of his time, for they leave him only about 250 days for work. He would sooner work on a Sunday than on a saint's day.

Pilgrimages assume enormous proportions in the Church life of Russia. Kiev is now the chief centre of pilgrimages in the world. It has been calculated that in the year 1886 at least a million pilgrims, each contributing a candle and a coin, visited this city, the shrine of primitive Russian Christianity.[1] Sometimes the atmosphere in a church becomes positively stifling, and the people are nearly choked by the fumes of the pilgrims' innumerable candles. Relics and miracle-working icons are the special objects visited in these huge pilgrimages. In many convents the monks' occupation seems to consist simply in keeping relics and icons and collecting alms.[2]

[1] Leroy Beaulieu, part iii. p. 212. [2] *Ibid.* p. 216.

CHAPTER VI

THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN MODERN RUSSIA

Morfill; Rambaud; Leroy Beaulieu; Heard, *The Russian Church and Russian Dissent*, 1887; Wallace, *Russia*, new edit., 1905, vol. i.; *Cambridge Modern History*, vol. x., chap. xiii. For Catherine II., *Mémoires of Princess Dashkoff*, published by Mrs. W. Bradford, 1840; and for Alexander I., *Mémoires du Prince Adam Czartoryski, et sa Correspondence avec l'Empereur Alexander I.*, dating from 1795; Sutherland Edwards, *The Romanoffs*, 1890; Bain, *Pupils of Peter the Great*, 1897.

AFTER the death of Peter the Great (A.D. 1725) Russia was disturbed by contending factions. The great tsar's widow Catherine succeeded to the throne, but only survived him for two years. Peter, the son of the ill-fated Alexis, followed, and soon died. Next came the uneventful reign of Anne, who died in the year 1740. A series of changes in the government now rapidly supervened, till Elizabeth, the only surviving child of Peter the Great, was seated on the throne. Her father had introduced civilians into the body that managed the Church estates. Elizabeth reverted to the old custom and gave these estates back entirely into the hands of ecclesiastics. It was a time of reaction in favour of the Church. The empress showed herself very energetic in church-building, the promotion of pilgrimages, and the persecution of dissenters.

Peter III., Elizabeth's nephew and successor, meditated a great measure of reform. This was nothing less than the appropriation of the Church lands. He was not strong enough to carry out so stupendous an enterprise. But this task was accomplished by his consort and successor, Catherine II. (A.D. 1762–1796). She was an able

sovereign, of German birth and education, and therefore more enlightened than her predecessors, but of scandalous morals, who ousted her feeble husband and usurped his authority. Although Peter the Great acquired large practical knowledge in the West and set a high value on European science, he was always a barbarian at heart, and he mocked the civilisation he mimicked. But Catherine, also deservedly called "the Great," really understood it and endeavoured to introduce genuine reforms on modern lines. The specific reform which Peter III. dreamed of and which Catherine effected was urgently needed. The Church had become a parasite on the State, a vampire sucking its life-blood, showing no life itself, but able to drain the life of the nation, fattening on the starvation of the people. An English contemporary writer says of the monasteries, "They have wrought that if any part of the realm be better and sweeter than other, there standeth a friary or monastery dedicated to some saint."[1] The number of serfs belonging to the monks now amounted to nearly a million. Catherine appointed a mixed lay and ecclesiastical commission to arrange the transference both of the land and of its human property, the serfs. The one became crown land, and the other, remaining still in slavery, passed over to State ownership. In return it was ordered that a fixed revenue drawn from the public funds should be paid to the archimandrites for the support of their monks. Monasteries could now no longer acquire land without the sanction of the government. With the loss of their property the monks declined in independence and prestige. They also rapidly declined in numbers, although the number of the nuns is said to have been growing. There was a constant rivalry between the black clergy (the monks), and the white clergy (the parish popes), the black clergy trying to exercise authority over the white, who in turn endeavoured to evade their interference.

Napoleon's ill-fated attack on Russia distracted attention for a time from internal affairs, both civil and ecclesiastical.

[1] Quoted by Morfill, p. 221.

But its successful repulse with immense loss to the invader and his final overthrow were followed by a corresponding expansion and strengthening of the power of Russia, which may be said to have been now at her zenith. Alexander I. (A.D. 1801–1825) showed himself at first to be progressive and reforming in several directions. During his reign, several universities, including that of St. Petersburg, were founded. But the administration of the whole empire was rotten. "Everything was corrupt, everything unjust, everything dishonest," writes the official Russian historian when describing the last ten years of Alexander's reign.[1] The tsar now became distinctly reactionary. He allowed the censorship of the press to be made more rigid—a sure sign that discontent was rising, and that attempts to meet its demands were slackening.

At this time there were 110,000 white clergy, 5,700 black clergy, and 5,300 nuns; 27,000 churches, including 450 cathedrals (*sobors*) and about 500 chapels, 377 monasteries and 99 nunneries. The annual expenditure of the Church was about 900,000 roubles.[2] A contest now arose between the Holy Synod and the government. The Church authority was desirous of making itself independent of control by the State. In this movement the synod was led by Seraphim, archbishop of Tver, afterwards of Moscow, and later of St. Petersburg, where he became also president of the Holy Synod. He was a narrow-minded bigot, but astute, and he induced an excitable young ascetic, the archimandrite Photius, religious teacher of the school of cadets, to further his projects. A man of a finer type was Philaret, archbishop of Yaroslaff, and afterwards of Moscow, whom Photius denounced as a "freemason," and whom Seraphim accused of being "unorthodox" and of having "Lutheran" tendencies. In his early reforming period Alexander endeavoured to improve the wretched condition of the white clergy, by placing them on a fixed salary paid by the State, and raising the character of the whole body. It was with the tsar's assistance that a Bible Society was

[1] See *Cambridge Modern History*, vol. x. p. 420. [2] *Ibid.* p. 422.

formed in Russia after the model of the "British and Foreign Bible Society." During the first nine years of its existence this society printed 129 editions of the Bible and as many as 675,000 copies. In the year 1817 Alexander reorganised the synod and put it under the authority of the Minister of Education, who, according to the terms of his appointment, "was henceforth to occupy the same leading position with respect to the synod, as the Minister of Justice with respect to the Senate." The tsar manifested some sympathy with mysticism; he also came to an agreement with the pope for the establishment of an archbishopric at Warsaw, and a harmonious arrangement between the two Churches in that city. He may have been meditating the age-long question of the "union," so dear to the hearts of successive popes of Rome, and opening at times so promising a prospect for much-harassed emperors. But this arrangement was nothing so ambitious. The two religions existed side by side in Poland. It was well that they should be at peace, each enjoying its rights and liberties.

But all this was most objectionable to the Holy Synod, for it seemed to threaten the foundations of the authority of the hierarchy. A few years later (A.D. 1822), Seraphim, taking the lead in the opposition, used Photius as his instrument to influence the tsar. That strange personage, half-mediæval saint, half-Jesuit in character, so completely won over Alexander that the tsar fell at his feet, kissed his hands, and seemed to yield entirely to his hypnotic influence. Photius made the best of his opportunity, denouncing Galitzin, the Minister of Education, the Catholics, the Lutherans, the mystics, the secret societies, the Bible Society—everything that made for freedom of thought, as enemies both to the throne and to the Church. Alexander wavered; he would not yield at once, for he was of a suspicious nature. Two years passed, and then Seraphim himself denounced Galitzin to the tsar as the enemy of orthodoxy. Alexander, who was well meaning, but dreamy and vacillating, still resisted for a time; but Seraphim was firm and uncompromising, and he had supporters. In

the end the tsar yielded. Galitzin was dismissed, and was succeeded by a reactionary, Shishkoff; the independence of the sacred synod was restored; and the Bible Society's activity was checked, though not actually suppressed till after Alexander's death.

Nicholas I. (1825–1855) favoured the orthodox Church and the reactionaries, and persecution of nonconformists was now revived. Nevertheless the Uniats once again tried to bring the Russian Church into the Roman communion. This most recent attempt was no more successful than its predecessors. In the year 1839 the Russian Uniat bishops met at Polosk, and issued a memorial to the tsar expressing their willingness to return to the orthodox fold. The consequence was that a million and a half Uniats were forcibly brought into the Russian Church and more than 2,000 churches taken over. The effect of this act of tyranny on Poland was most disastrous. Nicholas I. was a stern despot who drove the synod with a tight rein.

Alexander II. (1855–1881) is deservedly famous for his great act of humanity in the emancipation of the serfs. In earlier ages the country people had consisted of three classes—independent peasant farmers, free hired labourers who could move at will from place to place, and slaves. But in course of time all three had become serfs, and the serfs were really nothing but slaves. Their lot was much worse than that of the villeins of feudalism in the West. In Russia there was no idea of mutual obligations subsisting between the lord and his people, no family bond. Serfs were bought and sold like cattle. The same advertisement would offer cows and horses, capable working-men and handsome young women for sale. This marketing was quite regardless of relationship. A family might be broken up and its several members sold to different masters.[1] The serfs were flogged and tortured and outraged with impunity. When extravagance and bad public finance were bringing many of the aristocracy to the verge of ruin, the serfs had to work the harder. This slavery of white men and women in

[1] Wallace, *Russia*, new edit. vol. ii. pp. 114 ff.

Russia was as bad as the worst form of negro slavery in America.

Nicholas had meditated putting a stop to the dreadful social condition of his empire that serfdom involved; but it was left for his son to carry out the great reform. This was done in the year 1861. The landowners received an indemnity from the State, and the serfs were set free from all bondage to them; at the same time the land of the village commune was made the actual property of the peasants.

Three years later (A.D. 1864), Alexander released the clergy from their caste bondage. The Church was now thrown open to all classes. Nevertheless, as there were no parsonages and glebes attached to the parishes, and since each pope's house and the land he cultivated was his own property, it still remained necessary for a newly appointed priest to marry his predecessor's daughter—unless his own father was a priest whom he might succeed—in order to have a house to live in and a field to live by.

Some other slight changes have since been effected in the social life of the people. Count Dmitri Tolstoi, when both High Procurator and Minister of the Interior, multiplied the parish schools and put them under the direction of the local clergy. In the reign of Alexander II. there were as many as 20,000 such schools—on paper. Subsequently the Zemstvos established secular schools, before which the church schools shrank up and withered away. One of the reactionary measures of the notorious Pobiê-donostsef was the restoration of the church schools. In 1884 he stated to the Holy Synod that the parish schools were especially intended to strengthen the people in the foundations of the faith! These schools were then placed under the direction of the Holy Synod.[1]

There is tragic irony in the fate of the tsar who conferred the greatest boons on his people. Alexander had found his people really no nation, divided by a gulf of social cleavage, the workers mere bondsmen to the lords. At one

[1] Leroy Beaulieu, part iii. p. 265.

stroke he had granted freedom, if not social equality. His reward was assassination by agents of one of the secret societies formed in the interests of liberty. Nothing could demonstrate more clearly the deep-rooted disease of the body politic. And yet improvements were still going forward.

CHAPTER VII

RUSSIAN SECTS

Books named in Chap. II.; also Wallace, *Russia*, new edit., 1905, vol. i.; W. H. Dixon, *Free Russia*, 1870; Heard, *The Russian Church and Russian Dissent*, 1887; *Le Raskol, Essai sur les Sectes religieuses en Russie*, 1878; Elkington, *The Doukhobors*, 1903; Dalton, *Der Stundismus in Russland*, 1896.

NONCONFORMITY is as important a feature of the history of religion in Russia as it is in England. But, except in the case of the more recent sects which owe their origin to Western Protestant influences, Russian dissent is very different from English dissent. The typical English nonconformist is an opponent of ritualism and a champion of liberalism. He represents the Puritan of the seventeenth century. But the typical Russian nonconformist is a martyr to a rigorously conservative ritual. Although there are now in Russia sects of an opposite character, the "Old Dissent" arose as a protest against the supposed innovations in the ritual of the Church introduced by Nicon's revision of the service books. It is known as the *Raskol* (a Russian word meaning "division" or "schism"); and its adherents are called *Raskolniks* ("schismatics"). The movement, which originated in the seventeenth century, soon assumed vast proportions. It numbers 1,500,000 persons in the columns of the census; but many more belong to it who do not make this open profession for fear of persecution, and it is estimated to contain really some twelve or fifteen million members. These consist almost entirely of peasants, or persons who have sprung from the peasant classes. None are found among the

upper classes, who look down on the Raskolniks with contempt. But not a few of them are rich men. They engage in trade, especially in money-lending. Sober, honest, industrious, thrifty, they are able to surpass the orthodox Russians in the competition of life. They are regarded by the peasants with the respect due to their character as the more religious people of the land. It is said that if you come upon an especially clean, well-kept cabin in Russia, the proprietor will turn out to be an old dissenter. The Raskolnik people have been credited with "erudite ignorance."

But the movement did not spring from any new spiritual awakening, anything like a revival, such as we see to have been the source of most of our English and American separate Christian denominations. It started purely in protest against new phrases and rubric directions, and these were not innovations on sacred originals, but corrections of verbal corruptions and changed usages which Nicon and the scholars who helped him regarded as marks of degeneration. Thus the supposed novelties were really reversions to antiquity. But this was not admitted by the ignorant peasants, and just as Jerome's Vulgate, which was a corrected Latin version of the Bible that Pope Damasus had ordered because the various popular versions were very corrupt, was nevertheless received with suspicion and hatred by the mutitude; and, as the English Revised Version has also been regarded by most ignorant Bible readers with dislike, so Nicon's correction of the service book was treated as an irreverent meddling with holy words and customs. The protest was pressed to the smallest minutiæ. Thus one writer says, "In such a year wiseacres commenced to say, '*O Lord* have mercy on us,' instead of '*Lord* have mercy on us.'" The Raskolniks were most insistent in holding to the incorrect spelling of our Lord's name as "Issus," instead of accepting Nicon's correction of it to "Iissus."[1] But perhaps the most hated innovation, or rather reversion to antiquity, was the substitution of the

[1] The second "i" is pronounced soft like the η in Ἰησοῦς.

sign of the cross with three fingers for the sign of the cross with two fingers. To accept this meant that children would have to unlearn a practice that had been taught them at their mother's knee. Such an unsettling of domestic religion was not to be thought of. On these and other grounds of the same nature, of which of course they found an abundance in a corrected version of the service books, the Raskolniks broke off from the ancient Church of Russia. It is their opponents who call them by the name that brands them with the sin of schism. The title that they take for themselves is *Staro-viêry*, which means "Old Believers"; they are the people who cling to the faith of their fathers. Yet deep as is the gulf of division thus caused, and bitter as were the mutual recriminations formerly hurled across it, there is no difference of theological ideas separating the two parties. Both hold to the only two standards of faith required by the orthodox Church—the Bible and the Nicene Creed; nor do they differ at all in their interpretations of Scripture or creed.

These old dissenters therefore have nothing in common with Protestantism. Their origin is in no way comparable with the contemporary rise of various sects in Western Europe. They are Russian of the Russians.

In course of time various influences led to remarkable developments among the "Old Believers" in very different directions. One thing, however, they shared in common: they were all regarded as schismatics, and therefore they were all not only denounced by the Church but regarded with disfavour by the government. It was not forgotten that the corrections, or innovations, were introduced by order of the tsar and forced on the Church by imperial authority. Here then was a State violation of the customary order of the Church. The Raskolniks resented the innovations themselves, and they were indignant at the arbitrary and tyrannical manner in which they were made compulsory. It was natural enough that people should deem it a sacrilegious outrage for government officials to march into the churches, seize the venerated service books, deposit

others in place of them, and by order of the tsar command the town and village popes to use the novel rubrics. Later on, when Peter the Great abolished the patriarchate and substituted for that semi-independent office his own nominated Holy Synod, and when the orthodox Church in Russia passed more than ever under the control of the State and its bureaucratic government, the dissenters who stood outside these movements came to represent to some extent the Free Church idea. They were not attached to the State; their services were not regulated by a government department.

The Raskol obtained new vigour from another source—popular resistance to Peter the Great's Western innovations. Here it was on solid ground. The European customs were novel to Russia, and many now rallied to the Old Believers. At first the movement had been confined to Moscow; now it spread all over Russia. Its flames were fanned by a breeze of prejudiced patriotism. Thus the Old Believers stood for Old Russia and Old Russian ways. They regarded Peter's novelties as portents of the approaching end of the world and advent of Antichrist.[1] This idea of Antichrist bulks largely in the Raskol. Some perhaps identify him with the tsar; but to the majority who believe in his presence he is a mysterious personage existing somewhere in the world, to whose malignant machinations the corruptions of the Church and the troubles of the nation are due. Formerly some maintained that the true Peter, "the white Tsar," had perished at sea, and that a Jew, a son of Satan married to a German wife, had usurped his place. Hence this German invasion!

Old Believers were found objecting to everything in the way of European innovations. They objected to the change of the calendar; they objected to the change of dress—Peter's substitution of European costume for the Oriental gowns formerly worn by Russians; they objected to the practice of shaving. This latter novelty was regarded as distinctly heretical, disfiguring man who was

[1] Leroy Beaulieu, part iii. p. 299.

created in the image of God and "likening him even unto cats and dogs."[1] So serious was the objection felt to be, that Peter got Dmitri of Rostoff to write a treatise on "The Image and Likeness of God in Man," showing its spiritual character. It had little or no effect on the Old Believers. "The image of God is the beard, and the likeness the moustache," wrote one of these fanatics as late as the year 1836. There have been martyrs to the beard. In the year 1874 a recruit was punished with seven years' imprisonment for mutiny because he refused to be shaved. This is the Nemesis of image worship. The image worshipper can only conceive of God in the form of a conventional icon; and that form, with the bearded aspect of the representation of the First Person in the Trinity, becomes itself sacred in a man.

The old dissenters divided into two parties soon after the origin of the schism. The cause of this division was the extraordinary situation produced by a lack of bishops. In the days of Nicon only one priest stood for the old books —Paul of Kolòmna. This man was imprisoned for his contumacy, and when he died in prison there was nobody in all the Raskol who was competent to administer the sacraments. The difficulty which now stared the Old Believers in the face was entirely novel, quite without parallel. Other schisms in the Church which did not deny episcopacy had carried off bishops with them. Thus there were Marcionite bishops in the early Church who were able to build up a Marcionite hierarcy. On the other hand, the Montanists owed their very existence in great part to a protest against the root idea of an authoritative priesthood, and in this they were followed by the Protestant bodies on the continent, Lutheran as well as Reformed. The controversies that have been fought on the question of the consecration of Archbishop Parker may enable Anglican High Churchmen to sympathise with the perplexity of the Russian Old Believers. But the Russian dissidents had nobody that they could attempt to put forward on any

[1] *Ibid.* p. 305.

pretext as a bishop in the apostolical succession. And yet they were extreme ritualists, with whom the validity of the sacraments depended absolutely on consecration by an episcopally ordained priest. Here was a dilemma of vital consequence to the life of the Raskol. How was it to be met?

Two answers of opposite character were given to the question thus suddenly raised and urgently demanding immediate settlement. One was that priests must be obtained, and this course was found more or less practicable in course of time by renegades from orthodoxy deserting to the Raskol. But the more uncompromising Old Believers refused to admit the validity of the priestly grace of men who had been in the degenerate Church, and who were tainted by their usage of the corrected service books. These people came to the appalling conclusion that there was no true apostolic succession left in the world, no valid priesthood at all. The holy fire on the altar was extinguished; and there was nobody left capable of rekindling it. The two groups were known respectively as the *Popòftsky*, or "priest people," and the *Bef-popòftsky* or "no-priest people." Subdivisions followed, so that the Raskol cannot be regarded as a sect or denomination; it is an amorphous mass of very divergent sects that are out of communion with the State Church.

The *Popòftsky* long laboured under the disadvantage of depending for its ministry on the precarious chance of desertions from the orthodox Church. At length this humiliating and harassing condition has been superseded by the establishment of an independent episcopacy, and the Old Believers of the priest party now have their own ordained popes. In the year 1846 they obtained a metropolitan in the person of a Greek, Ambrose, formerly a bishop in Bosnia, who had been deposed by the patriarch of Constantinople. This man joined the Old Believers and was accepted by them as their ecclesiastical head. Unable to live in Russia, owing to the attitude of the government towards the Raskol, he settled at a place called "White Fountain," in Austria, near the Russian border. The

course was now clear for a complete organisation of the sect. Ambrose at once proceeded to create an entire hierarchy. But this was not accepted without demur by all the community. They stood for Russian isolation, Russia for the Russian. But here was a Greek living in Austria administering the affairs of the Old Believers. If there were war between Austria and Russia, what would happen? The position was most objectionable. Accordingly in the year 1868 a council of this branch of the Raskol was held at White Fountain; but it only led to an accentuation of the differences and left matters worse than before. The stiffer members of the priestly party refused to accept the newly imported priesthood, and preferred to go on as before relying on their chance to obtain deserters from among the priests of the orthodox Church in Russia. They could have no respect for priests of this character. Among the Old Believers the priests have a lower place even than that of the village popes in the orthodox Church. They are treated as mere hirelings, as men of no importance on their own account, only used to give efficacy to sacraments.

The *Bef-popòftsy*, the "no-priest" party, took very different lines. They organised a church without sacraments—excepting the sacrament of baptism, which could be administered by laymen. They met this anomalous situation in various ways. Some simply bowed to the inevitable, accepted the deprivation as a judgment of heaven, and waited for better times. They were like a Western people suffering from a papal interdict. This was the most obvious and sensible position to take up. It exactly agreed with the logic of the situation. But fanatics caricatured it ridiculously. Thus there were the "Gapers," who would stand on Holy Thursday with their months open waiting for the angels to feed them.

The most serious question which rose out of this anomalous situation was concerned with the sacrament of marriage. If all sacraments were now in abeyance owing to the absence of true priests to administer them, marriage was impossible, for this too was a sacrament. The recent

contrivance of civil marriage was not then in existence, and if it had been, rigorous sacramentarians who were inclined to regard the government as Antichrist would not have submitted to it. Accordingly all marriage was forbidden by the no-priest party. Some understood this requirement of celibacy in a pure, ascetic sense, and anticipated the end of the world by the cessation of births. Others accepted it as an excuse for illicit connections, which, though they admitted them to be sins, they regarded as lesser sins than marriage by a priest tainted with the corruption of the orthodox Church. To some the monstrous position thus brought about became a horror which should be put an end to at any cost. There were child-killers, who sent young infants straight to heaven in order to save them from life in a world now subject to Antichrist. People, known as "clubbers," battered old men and women to death, quoting our Lord's saying, "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." One sect, known as the *Philippoftsky*, sought redemption by suicide. Whole families, whole villages, put themselves to death. The mania was propagated by prophets, who stood by to see that none shrank back in weakness from the universal self-immolation. Some of these people practised "fiery baptism," in plain words incendiarism and death by burning. A family shuts itself up in its cottage; brushwood is heaped about it; the prophet sets fire to the fuel; and the house and all within it are burnt. Then there were the *Iskàleli Khristà*—"Christ seekers," who went about seeking Christ and sometimes believed they had found Him in a prince, or perhaps a peasant. One of the most curious forms that the association of the idea of Antichrist with the tsar's government took is said to have been the veneration of the image of Napoleon secretly treasured in the home. There are to be found in Russia pictures representing the French emperor ascending to heaven surrounded by his marshals. It was rumoured that he was not dead, that he had escaped from St. Helena, and that he was in Siberia by Lake Baikal.

Others, taking a more moderate course, but influenced by the same principles, fled from the contaminated haunts of civilisation and buried themselves in deep recesses of the forests. In 1850 Nicolas I. had the cells of the forest dissenters destroyed. The *Strànniki*, or "Runners," refused to have any fixed abode in this world of Antichrist. They were pilgrims and strangers, constantly running from place to place. Fortunately there were lay brothers living in the towns and villages and working at trades, from the proceeds of which the *élite* were supported during their peripatetic life. The *Theodosians* would not eat or drink with the profane. Another sect, the *Pomortsky*, were more liberal. They would not pray for the "imperator," for that would be to make the tsar Antichrist. But they would pray for the "tsar" under this more modest title. In the present day many of the Old Believers of the "no-priest" party are less rigid than formerly. They will permit marriage as a civil bond; but, since it is not a sacrament, they hold that its continuance is subject to mutual consent.

Too much importance has been given to the vagaries of the more extravagant sects which are not reckoned as part of the Raskol. Similar phenomena have appeared in America, and yet we do not regard them as characteristic of American religion. The same must be said of those who went into the opposite direction to the ascetics, and practised free love "on principle." The *Shakouni* or "Jumpers," the dervishes of Christendom, cannot be regarded as Christian at all if they are guilty of the practices with which they are charged. The performance from which they derive their name may be childishly innocent, although it borders on insanity and has no real religion in it. They stand in circles, men and women facing one another, and jump, panting, sobbing, shouting, screaming; they jump higher and higher, each one striving to be the highest jumper; when the excitement is most intense they break up and take their own courses, some whirling madly round, others standing transfixed as in catalepsy. The common belief is that an indescribably shameless scene follows.

The most amazing sect is that of the *Khlysty*, the members of which are said to have invented a horrible ritual for the Eucharist, from which in its normal form they are excluded by their Raskol tenets. They are said to hail an unmarried woman in their orgiastic dance as *Bogoròdista*, "mother of God," and to address her with the words, "Thou art blessed among women. Thou shalt give birth to a Saviour." If the young woman becomes a mother and her child is a girl, the infant is brought up to succeed as a new Bogoròdista; if it is a boy it is regarded as Christ. This Christ child is said to be killed at the altar and its flesh and blood eaten for the Eucharist. M. Leroy Beaulieu quotes several Russian authorities in support of these charges, which lead him to the conclusion that "there is much to show that these stories are not pure inventions."[1] But we must remember that exactly the same things were said about the early Christian *Agape* by pagan adversaries, and everybody knows that the libels were absolutely baseless. Not long ago there were riots in Austria, in which Jews were murdered on the ground that they had killed and eaten a Christian child at the Passover. Again and again in the course of history similar charges have been brought against obnoxious sects. On the other hand, not only has a grave mass of testimony been brought against the Khlysty; but it must be acknowledged that in many parts of Russia the peasantry are extremely ignorant and little removed from barbarism. If these awful things are done even in the present day, they must be regarded as survivals of the dark vices of paganism among people who were never truly Christianised or who have relapsed from Christianity to practical heathenism. The Church cannot afford to hold up her hands in holy horror at these abominations; for it is the neglect of preaching and teaching, and the conduct of her services purely as ceremonies apart from spiritual thought and life, that have left the poor people to become the prey of evil influences. Nevertheless it is probable that the vilest of

[1] *Opus cit.* p. 420.

these practices, if carried on at all, are very rare indeed, and that some of those communities in which they were once found are now quite clear of them.

There is one sect, however, the nature of whose doings cannot be doubted. This consists of the *Skopsty*, the "Eunuchs," the members of which may be recognised by their pallid faces, thin voices, and unmanly bearing. Regarding marriage as impossible owing to the failure of sacramental grace, they aim at removing all difficulties in that direction by mutilating themselves. This is not done to them in childhood, but after attaining to manhood, when the operation is very serious. Some of them have children first, for the propagation of the sect. But they are found in two grades. There are some to whom marriage is allowed; and others, the elect, become eunuchs. The elect are credited with direct inspiration from God with the gift of prophecy, which issues in ecstasy. But in daily life they are the mildest and simplest of men.

None of these extravagant sects can be called Christian. They have attracted much attention on account of their eccentricities and owing to the sensational descriptions of them that have appeared in popular books. But they are not symptomatic of the Raskol or of religion in Russia.

Of an entirely different character are the movements carried on among earnest Christian people of high character, the very salt of the land. The most important of these Russian dissenters are the *Molokans*[1] and the *Doukhobors* ("Spirit-wrestlers"). These two bodies have much in common, and their members pass freely from one to the other. They not only stand outside the State Church like the Raskol, but they entirely repudiate the hierarchical and sacerdotal system of the orthodox communion. They reject

[1] Said to be so named as "milk-drinkers" from their habit of taking milk and food prepared from milk on the fast days when it is prohibited by the orthodox Church, but more probably so called after the name Molotchnaya, a river in the south of Russia, in the neighbourhood of which they once flourished.

episcopacy and sacramentarianism, and they are altogether opposed to rites and ceremonies. Their aim is to promote spiritual religion by spiritual means. Both of them rely upon the Bible; but while the Molokans do so exclusively, the Doukhobors also appeal to the inward testimony of the Spirit. We may compare the one party with the Presbyterians and the other with the Society of Friends. They both call themselves *Istinie Khristiane* ("True" or "Spiritual Christians"). In their rejection of sacramentarianism they are the direct opposite of the Raskolniks, who are fanatics of ritual. "The Raskolnik," they say, "will die a martyr for the right to make the sign of the cross with two fingers; we do not cross ourselves at all, either with two or with three fingers; we strive to attain a better knowledge of God."[1] These people reject all the characteristic forms of Russian worship, not only the repeated crossing of themselves by the worshippers, but the genuflections and prostrations (*pokloni*) which are so prominent in the religious observances of Russia. They will have nothing to do with icons. "God is a Spirit," they say, "and images are but idols. A picture is not Christ; it is but a bit of painted board. We believe in Christ, not a Christ of brass, nor of silver, nor of gold, the work of men's hands, but in Christ, the Son of God, Saviour of the world."[2]

It is difficult to trace the origin of these sects. In the year 1689, Kullmann, a disciple of Jacob Boehm, was burnt at Moscow; in 1710 Procopius Lupin was condemned for asserting that the Church had lost the true spirit of Christianity; and in 1714 Dmitri Tvaritenev was convicted by a synod of spreading Calvinistic ideas. It is reasonable to suppose that Russian Protestantism had some connection with the Protestantism of Germany and Switzerland, which it resembles to a great extent; but this connection has not been definitely traced out.[3]

The Molokans ascribe the origin of their movement to

[1] Heard, *Russian Church and Russian Dissent*, p. 274.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 275.
[3] *Ibid.* pp. 276–7.

the visit of an English physician to Moscow in the reign of Ivan the Terrible, who introduced the reading and study of the Bible. It would appear that it is more owing to this Bible study by Russians themselves than to any direct Protestant evangelisation that they came to adopt scriptural ideas of Christianity. And yet the thorough protestantism of the confession of faith they presented to the government shows that the same ideas were in them that were working in the continental Calvinists and English Puritans. This confession concludes with the following statement: "Besides the holy sacraments, we accept the Word of God and inward faith as our guides. We do not consider ourselves as not sinful, nor as holy, but work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, in the hope of attaining it solely, and alone, through belief in Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, and the fulfilment of the commands of the Lord; we have no power of ourselves to effect this, but obtain it only through living faith in our intercessor and redeemer, Jesus Christ."[1] Nothing could be more completely evangelical than that. Even the reference to the sacraments refers only to their symbolical character.

Mr. Wallace gives us an interesting account of the Molokans drawn up from personal enquiries among members of the sect. The results of the enquiries agree in the main with what we learn from other sources. They show that these people take for their model the early Apostolic Church as depicted in the New Testament, and reject all later authorities. They have no hierarchy and no paid clergy. Each congregation chooses one presbyter and two assistants, who must be men of exemplary life well acquainted with the Scriptures, and whose duty it is to take pastoral oversight of the religious and moral welfare of the flock. They meet on Sundays in private houses—church-building by heretics being forbidden—and spend two or three hours in singing, prayer, reading of Scripture, and conference on religious topics. A member will state some

[1] Haxthausen, *The Russian Empire* (trans. by R. Farie, 1856), quoted by Heard, p. 276.

religious difficulty. The brethren then discuss the question and decide it by appeal to Scripture, which they know well and can quote freely. The moral discipline of this Church is very strict. It has been disturbed from time to time by the appearance of fanatical prophets, but its members have had the good sense to see through them and not to be led astray. Its numbers are considerable, perhaps amounting to several hundred thousand.[1]

In the year 1814 one of the leading Molokans among the colony by the Molotchnaya was arrested for proselytising and thrown into prison. For the most part the Russian government has followed the example of the broad-minded Roman Empire in leaving each religious community undisturbed so long as it remained quiet and self-contained. Even the Church in Russia, with all the rigour of its boasted orthodoxy, does not trouble to follow the example of the Roman Catholic Inquisition and enquire into the private opinions of people, if those opinions are kept private. This nonchalance with regard to heresy is a natural consequence of an exclusive regard for ritual. Where religion is almost wholly an external affair, it logically follows that ideas count for little or nothing. But the case is altered immediately a heretic bestirs himself to spread his notions abroad, because the result may be not only to poison the minds of the orthodox, but even to lead them to break from the Church and its usages.

In course of time the colony at Molotchnaya became very much disorganised. Twenty years later (A.D. 1834) a government enquiry was said to have resulted in convicting them of abominable practices. But this must not be accepted as any real proof of guilt. There is no doubt that the Molokans generally are people of most worthy character. Still, Nicholas I. took advantage of the finding of the enquiry to order all people of both sects, the Doukhobors as well as the Molokans, to return to the orthodox Church on pain of exile. As they would not

[1] *Russia*, new edit. vol. i. chap. xvii.

yield, he ordered them to be transported to the Caucasus (A.D. 1840). There the Molokans have built villages and become prosperous in their industry and thrift.

The Doukhobors have more mystical tendencies. Possibly they inherit ideas and influences from the Bogomiles, and so continue that tradition of Protestantism in the Eastern Church which was long cherished by the Paulicians in Armenia. As "champions of the Spirit" the Doukhobors are less bound to the letter of Scripture than the Molokans. Their doctrine of the indwelling Christ, so rich and fruitful when spiritually accepted, has been taken too literally by some of their people. Kapoustine, a distinguished leader of the body, gave prominence to the idea that Christ is born again in every believer, while he taught the immanence of God in all mankind. His theology was Adoptionist. God descended into Jesus and made Him Christ because He was the purest and most perfect of mankind. From generation to generation, however, this incarnation has been repeated. "Thus," Kapoustine said, "Sylvan Kolisnisk, of whom the older among you know, was Jesus; but now, as truly as the heaven is above me and the earth under my feet, I am the true Jesus Christ your Lord!" He was taken at his word and adored, for the Russian peasant is credulous. Such an aberration, however, is not characteristic of the community as a whole. It is merely a fanatical perversion of its central principle—a principle which it shares with the soberest of Quakers. The Doukhobors are abstainers from alcohol, non-smokers, and for the most part vegetarians. Communism is with them a religious principle.[1]

The first known apostle of the doctrine of the Doukhobors was a returned soldier, or a German prisoner, who appeared at a village in Ukraïna about the year 1740. Therefore the sect is more recent than the kindred body of the Molokans. They are said to have issued a confession of faith in the year 1791. By the end of the eighteenth century they had spread from Moscow to the Volga.

[1] Elkington, *The Doukhobors*, p. 147.

Persecuted by the Tsar Paul on political grounds, many were exiled to Siberia.

In the year 1797 the Doukhobors were savagely persecuted with the knout, the slitting of their noses, imprisonment in small cells, and hard labour. The ground of this persecution was a charge of attempting to convert the orthodox to their heresy. Senator Laputkin wrote in 1806, "No sect has up to this time been so cruelly persecuted as the Doukhobortsi; and this is certainly not because they are the most harmful."[1] Alexander I., being more tolerant of dissent than his predecessors, granted these people land near the Sea of Azoff. Unhappily a division took place among them in the year 1886, followed by a lawsuit, which resulted in the banishment of the defeated party to Siberia. A more unhappy episode in the history of a persecuted church has rarely been recorded in history. They had not profited spiritually by Alexander's clemency. But to their credit it should be added that the appeal to the law was made by quite a minority of the sect; the majority suffered for no fault of their own. Soon after this they experienced a religious revival. In recent days they have been persecuted—if that word may still be used—by the government for refusing military service. But in justice to the tsars it should be admitted that where conscription exists it must be enforced. The fault is in the odious system. This has led to the emigration of Doukhobors and the establishment of a colony of them in Canada.

The one Russian sect that is certainly an offshoot of Western Protestantism is the sect of the Stundists. It originated in the direct influence of a colony of German settlers near Odessa. Among these colonists were some who called themselves "Friends of God," and met for the reading of the Bible during their leisure hours[2] under a leader named Michael Ratuzny. Their principles were those of a simple evangelical faith together with the special

[1] Elkington, *The Doukhobors*, p. 243.

[2] Hence the name "Stundist" from *Stunden*, hours.

tenets of the Baptist. In a word, they were German Baptists. These Teutonic emigrants were essentially missionaries in spirit, because they were genuine Christians. At first they only attempted to influence their neighbours morally and spiritually, without making any effort to detach them from the orthodox Church. But as Russian converts began to gather about them, these followers felt it necessary of their own accord to break away from the national Church and found independent communities. Thus the movement spread. From Odessa and the government of Kherson it passed on to the neighbouring provinces of Ekaterinoslaff and Kiev. The Stundists are a sober, frugal, industrious, intelligent, peaceable people, obedient to the laws, and exact in the payment of the taxes. They are said to advocate an equal division of the land, and they may have socialistic tendencies. But they have not tried to put these views in force by revolutionary methods. If the Russian autocracy had been broad-minded and far-seeing it would have welcomed the appearance of such a people as the best harbinger of the regeneration of the country. Instead of this the government has dealt with them harshly, breaking up their communities and scattering the individual members. This policy, the aim of which is to destroy the heresy, has had the very opposite effect. It has sown the seed broadcast. Every exiled Stundist is a missionary of evangelical truth in the district to which he is sent. Stundism is the only religious novelty that has appeared in the south of Russia. All the other schisms and heresies arose at Moscow or farther north or west. But, thanks to the policy of the government, this promising awakening of religious life is now to be met with in widely separated parts of the empire. It is spreading rapidly in the neighbourhood of St. Petersburg. Amidst the terrible troubles with which the realm of the tsar is oppressed, some see the greatest hope in this remarkable growth of an earnest religious life of a Protestant type.

A study of religion in Russia would be incomplete

without some reference to Count Tolstoi (Leo Nicolayvitch), whose ideas are well known throughout the world. They are based on a literal insistence on the words of Christ as the law of the Christian life. This involves not only non-resistance, but the denial of any government by force, and the unlimited application of our Lord's direction to give to all who ask for help; the abolition of war, oaths, law courts, prisons and punishment, wealth and luxury; and the practice of universal brotherhood in peace and charity.

DIVISION IV

THE SYRIAN AND ARMENIAN CHURCHES

CHAPTER I

EARLY SYRIAN CHRISTIANITY

(*a*) Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* i. 13; Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.* iii. 16; Ephraim the Syrian; The *Homilies of Aphraates* (Wright, 1869); The *Doctrine of Addai* (Cureton's "Ancient Syriac Documents," 1864).

(*b*) Harnack, *Expansion of Christianity*, Book iv. Chap. iii. 5; Tixeront, *Les Origines de l'église d'Édesse*, 1888; *Texte u. Unters.* ix. 1; Duval, *La Litterature Syriaque* (2nd edit., 1900); Burkitt, *Early Eastern Christianity*, 1904, and Introduction to *Evangelion da Mepharreshe*, 1904.

FOUR influences have combined to keep the extreme Eastern portion of Christendom apart from the main body of the Greek Church. These may be described respectively as geographical, political, linguistic, and doctrinal.

Geographically the churches of the Euphrates valley and those which were planted farther east were separated from the churches to the west of them by the Syrian desert, the crossing of which was an expedition, as Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah had found in ancient times.

Politically the region in which they were situated when not independent was only connected with the Roman Empire at intervals, and was more continuously subject to Parthian and Persian sovereigns. At the time of the introduction of Christianity it was governed by its local rulers, whose names indicate an Arabian origin.

No doubt these two factors helped to establish the

third. In their isolation the Christians retained their own language, which was a branch of the Aramaic that had once been prevalent over all the region between the Euphrates and the Mediterranean, but which had subsequently given place to Greek in the parts subject to the Roman Empire. This will account for the difference between the Aramaic of the Targums and some parts of the Old Testament and the Christian Syriac represented by versions of the Bible and those patristic writings that arose in Mesopotamia. The Palestinian Aramaic probably used by our Lord and His disciples, and in which perhaps St. Matthew wrote his *Logia*—unless he employed the classic Hebrew—was very soon superseded in the Church by Greek, the *lingua franca* of all the civilised races round the Mediterranean. It may have been the dialect of the "Gospel according to the Hebrews" and of the Ebionite Gospel; but it was not the language of the churches of Antioch and Western Syria. When, therefore, Christianity appeared in the distant region of the Euphrates, where a slightly different dialect was used, it came in a Greek form, and in the first instance its promoters had to provide translations of the Gospels and other Christian writings, since the people of the land did not understand Greek. These translations and the original Christian writings which sprang up in the same district in the local dialect came to be designated Syriac. In other words, Syriac is now the name of the language employed in the Christian literature of Eastern Syria, as distinguished from Aramaic, which was the slightly different and older language of Palestine, afterwards superseded by Greek. A church using the Syriac language and producing its own literature in that language inevitably tended to a certain individuality.

But these three influences—the geographical, the political, and the linguistic—were far outweighed in importance by the fourth, the doctrinal. This counted for much more than all the others put together. Deserts can be crossed, governments defied, languages translated; but heresy remains separated from orthodoxy by an impassable

chasm. The Eastern Syrian Christians were early suspected of heresy imbibed from Tatian and Barsedanes. But the slight irregularities which might have been detected then were soon overcome. It is later that we see the great schisms produced first by Nestorian and then by the Monophysite heresies resulting in the establishment of the Nestorian and Jacobite Churches, both of them anathematised by the orthodox Church.

In the first place, then, we must understand that Syrian Christianity—in the early stages of its development—is the Christianity of the people speaking Syriac and living so far to the east that we scarcely think of their home as Syria at all. Meanwhile the Greek-speaking Syrians in the west, with their headquarters at Antioch, are a different body of Christians, and form an integral portion of the Greek Church till they too are cut off, first by heresy, and then by Islam. The headquarters of Syrian Christianity, and at first apparently its only centre, was the city of Edessa, known in the vernacular as *Urhai*, and now represented by *Urfa*, the capital of the district which the Greeks named *Osrhoene*, situated to the east of the Euphrates. While it is uncertain at what time and by what means the city was evangelised, there can be no doubt that this was not later than the second half of the second century of the Christian era; possibly the new light began to dawn in this far-off Eastern capital even before the middle of that century. The legend of Addai and King Abgar, which would carry it back to the times of Christ's life on earth, is manifestly unhistorical. Eusebius repeats it without any question as to its genuineness;[1] and it is contained in a Syriac form in the *Doctrine of Addai*, an apocryphal book of "acts" written at the end of the third century or the beginning of the fourth. Apart from the absence of earlier testimony and the inherent improbability of the story, it is condemned by obvious anachronisms.[2]

[1] *Hist. Eccl.* i. 13.

[2] Thus it refers to Eleutheropolis in Palestine, a name that was first

Nevertheless, the legend is important both on account of its popularity and because it contains hints of actual facts, for evidently it comes from earlier times than the age of the written records in which it is preserved. According to this legend, King Abgar, who is suffering from a terrible disease, having heard of the cures our Lord is working, sends for Jesus to come and heal him. Jesus, while not coming in person, writes him a letter in which He promises to send one of His disciples who will cure the king's disease. Although we have no ground for admitting this letter to be genuine, it has become a historic composition because of its wide acceptance and the immense veneration with which it has been regarded. It was found in the year 1900, preceded by the king's letter to Jesus, inscribed in Greek characters of about the age of Eusebius on a lintel at Ephesus. At the time of the Heptarchy our Anglo-Saxon ancestors copied the letter out and wore it as a charm "against lightning and hail and perils by sea and land, by day and night and in dark places." [1] Thus its subsequent history has given it a factitious value that makes it worth being quoted in full. The letter is addressed to the notary Hanan, who has found Jesus at the house of Gamaliel, the chief of the Jews. It runs as follows: "Go and say to thy Lord that sent thee unto me, Happy art thou, that though thou hast not seen me, thou hast believed in me; for it is written of me that they which see me will not believe in me, and they which see me not,—they will believe in me. Now as to what thou

attached to the place by Septimius Severus in A.D. 200. Moreover, the legend can be accounted for in some measure by the discovery of the actual fact that was the germ out of which it grew through the very natural confusion of two persons of the same name; and to account for a legend in this way is always the clinching argument that demolishes its claim. Abgar IX., a later king of Edessa, paid a visit to Rome during the bishopric of Zephyrinus (A.D. 202–218), and the name of Zephyrinus is also connected with Edessa through Serapion of Antioch. This Abgar may well have sent an embassy to Eleutheropolis. His earlier namesake could not possibly have done so nearly two centuries before the name of the place existed.

[1] Dom Kuyper's *Book of Cerne*, p. 205, cited by Burkitt, *Early Eastern Christianity*, p. 15.

hast written to me, that I should come unto thee,—that for which I was sent hither hath now come to an end, and I go up unto my Father that sent me; but when I have gone up unto Him, I will send thee one of my disciples, that whatever disease thou hast he may heal and cure. And all that are with thee he shall turn to life eternal, and thy town shall be blessed and no enemy shall have dominion over it for ever and ever."[1] The reader must be struck with the antique tone of this document. In particular, the antithetical sentence, "They which see me will not believe in me, and they which see me not,—they will believe in me," is exactly in the style of the Oxyrhynchus *Logia*.[2]

Still following the legend, we see Addai, one of the "Seventy," despatched by Thomas to Edessa after the resurrection of Christ, with the result that the king is immediately healed; whereupon he and a great number of his people are converted to Christianity. Addai is said to have laboured at Edessa to the end of his life, and to have died a natural death. He is succeeded by Aggai, who suffers martyrdom under Ma'nu, a heathen son of Abgar, his legs being broken while he is sitting at church. Aggai having no time to ordain his successor Palut, the latter goes to Antioch and there receives ordination from Serapion. Here we come out of the mist of legend into the light of history. But Serapion did not become bishop of Antioch till A.D. 190. Evidently then Palut cannot be

[1] Burkitt, pp. 13, 14.

[2] A seeming proof of great antiquity may be found in the last sentence, which promises Abgar that no enemy shall have dominion over his town for ever and ever. This sentence, which is contained in the Ephesian inscription as well as in the *Doctrine of Addai*, is discreetly omitted by Eusebius, who thus shows that he is aware of the sack of Edessa by Lucius Quietus, under Trajan. And yet, to place it at a more ancient date than that is to set back the origin of Christianity too early for all the other evidence. Therefore we seem driven to reverse the argument, and to see in this statement a reason for dating the letter considerably later, when the disaster was not in mind. At all events, one thing is certain: it could not have been written in the earlier decades of the first century when that horror was in the memories of the Syrian Christians.

brought so near to one of our Lord's personal disciples as the story suggests. But he is important in another way, as we shall see later on. Palut represents the advent of Antiochene influence over the far-off Syrian Church beyond the desert and the river. Hitherto the Christianity of Edessa had been developing independently; and a very interesting course it was then taking. One could have wished, for the sake of freedom and variety, that it had been let alone altogether, so that we might have witnessed the profoundly instructive spectacle of a Syrian Church, having its discipline and doctrine all to itself, working out its problems apart from the admixture of Greek philosophy and Roman methods of government which came in so early to modify primitive Christianity and translate it into the amalgam known as Catholicism. We cannot forget that the gospel had its origin in Syria; that it was first taught in Aramaic; that it began as an Oriental, Semitic faith. What should we have seen if it had been allowed to develop at least in one spot as still an Oriental, Semitic faith, without any admixture of Western civilisation?

In point of fact no such independent development was possible even in very early ages. Before the time of Palut, Greek influences had penetrated to Edessa, for the church in this city was in communication with its brethren farther west. Tatian's Harmony affords a proof of this statement, and at the same time a clear indication of the comparative separateness of the most ancient Syrian Christianity. In his *Address to the Greeks*[1] Tatian says that he was "born in the land of the Assyrians," but instructed in Greek doctrines and afterwards in those that he there undertakes to proclaim. Thus, like Justin Martyr, of whom he was a friend and disciple, Tatian came to Christianity after studying Greek philosophy. His writings cannot be dated later than about A.D. 175.[2] Now his *Address to the Greeks* and the titles of

[1] Chap. xlii.

[2] Lightfoot—A.D. 155–170; Westcott—A.D. 150–175; Harnack—the *Address to the Greeks*, A.D. 152–153.

all his books are in Greek—including that of his Harmony, which he calls *Diatessaron*.[1] There is therefore a certain amount of probability that he compiled this in Greek, out of the original Greek text of the Gospels, and then translated it into Syriac. Against this conclusion, however, is the fact that its text is of the same type as that of the oldest separate Syriac versions of the Gospels,[2] which of course could not have been dependent on the Harmony. There is then also some probability that this was made from a previously existing Syriac version of the Gospels. But that supposition is confronted with a serious difficulty. No such version was known at Edessa, the one centre of the Syriac-speaking Christians, for it seems certain that Tatian's Harmony was the only form in which the Gospels were first read in the Church. Previously the Syrian Christians had been satisfied with preaching and oral traditions about Christ. It was Tatian who introduced the written gospel record to Edessa, and he did this in the form of a harmony of all four Gospels, as a method which commended itself to his own private judgment. Here was a convenient way of presenting the whole gospel story at once instead of confusing people by offering them four parallel and more or less divergent narratives. Tatian's influence at Edessa must have been considerable; for he succeeded in getting his book read in the church at that city. Thus, while the other churches were using the four Gospels in their services, the Edessene Church was using Tatian's Harmony. Here was a curious distinction bearing witness to the aloofness of the Christians of Mesopotamia.

After Justin suffered martyrdom at Rome, it would appear that Tatian became his successor as a teacher of Christianity in the imperial city. If so, it is probable that his unorthodox views had not yet been developed, or

[1] Διατεσσάρων, *i.e.* "Harmony"—with an allusion to the four principal notes of music, not, as was formerly supposed, to the four Gospels out of which it is constructed. Cf. the word "Diapason."

[2] The Curetonian and the Sinaitic.

at all events not detected.[1] But in the year 172 he was excommunicated. Then he went to live in Syria, not far from Antioch, and later perhaps at his old home Edessa, where he is said to have died. All we know of his "heresy" is associated with the Roman period of his life. The omission of the genealogies of Jesus from his Harmony is an indication that his divergence from accepted doctrines had at least begun when he compiled that work. According to Irenæus,[2] he was a leader of the *Encratites*, or "Abstainers," people who repudiated marriage, meat, and wine. Irenæus also associated him with the Gnostics as inventing a doctrine of invisible æons, like the followers of Valentinus, while in his asceticism he resembled Marcion. Origen attributes to him a doctrine of the demiurge, saying that he understood the words "Let there be light" as a prayer of the creating god of this world to the supreme God. These statements are not supported by evidence, and they are not confirmed by Tatian's extant writings. His omission of the genealogies from the Diatessaron may indicate his agreement with Marcion's Docetism, but that is all; we have no trace here or elsewhere in his extant writings of any nearer approach to Valentinian Gnosticism. It may well be that, leaving Rome under a cloud, Tatian carried with him to the East some notions that were unpopular with the ecclesiastical authorities in the West. But when he found himself again among his simple-minded fellow-countrymen in distant Edessa, he was not suspected of heresy, or his Harmony would not have been acceptable there; nor is there any reason to suppose that he spread very peculiar ideas or founded a school of heterodox teaching. Certainly these Syrian Christians did not become Encratites.

A little later the Church at Edessa obtained a notable convert in the person of Bardaisan, who was born in the year

[1] Irenæus states that he did not express any of his objectionable views till after Justin's martyrdom, *Adv. Hær.* i. 28.

[2] *Ibid.*

154 and died in 222.[1] He was a man of scientific culture, but his mixture of astrological notions led to his expulsion from the Church, and he has come to be reckoned as one of the leaders of Syrian Gnosticism. Unlike Tatian, he was not ascetic. He did not join the Encratites; neither did he agree with Marcion in rejecting the Old Testament, or assigning the creation of the cosmos to a demiurge, a secondary god. According to the reports of his teaching, for which we are dependent on his opponents, his chief characteristic is the immense importance he attached to the power of evil, which he attributed in the first instance to Satan and then to the inherent malignity of matter, the origin of which he ascribed to Satan. Thus in the act of creation God formed the world out of pre-existent matter. It might be "the best of all possible worlds," but in a more limited sense than that in which Leibnitz used the phrase. The architect of the cosmos could only make the best of very objectionable material. In this way we are to account for the imperfections of nature and the evils of society. Here we have a combination of Persian and Greek conceptions. The important rôle assigned to a spiritual principle of evil is Zoroastrian; but the notion of a pre-existent matter out of which the Divine architect shapes the cosmos is Platonic. Now all this is more than doubtful. It has been gathered together from assertions and hints in Ephraim the Syrian and Western writers, some of which are but conjecturally connected with Bardaisan. So many of the Fathers accuse him of Gnosticism that it is probable there is some ground for their statements. Yet it seems as though his departures from conventional ideas have been greatly magnified. No trace of the Valentinian æons can be found even in his enemies' accounts of his tenets. We only possess one book which represents his views from his own side, and this contains nothing seriously unorthodox. It is the work commonly

[1] According to the account of him in Michael the Syrian, who lived as late as the end of the twelfth century, but who seems to have had ancient authorities to work upon. See Chabot, *Michel le Syrien.*

known as the dialogue "On Fate," but the actual title of which is *The Book of the Laws of Countries.* Dr. Cureton found and published a Syriac copy of it. The book purports to be written by a disciple of Bardaisan, but Mr. Burkitt considers this to be a literary device, and holds that Bardaisan himself was its author. Be that as it may, this book is our one ancient friendly account of the teaching of Bardaisan. The dialogue is a defence of free will against the astrological notion of a fate determined by the stars. It would seem to allow the influence of the stars in controlling physical phenomena. This notion is supported by a far-away perception of our modern scientific truth of the unity of nature and the interaction of all its parts. On the other hand, the argument goes to show that in the mind man possesses freedom; that his will is free; and that consequently his actions cannot be predicted by a study of the stars. Under the same stars different men act differently. This defence of free will is emphatically anti-Gnostic; Gnosticism, especially Valentinian Gnosticism, being rigorously necessarian.

Tatian and Bardaisan were the two men of brains in the early Syrian Church. It is unfortunate for the history of that Church that they both lie under suspicions of heresy, the one having been condemned in the West, the other in his own country. Had there been vigour of intellect enough at Edessa to have won over Bardaisan to the views of his fellow-Christians, or charity enough to have found room for him in spite of his peculiarities, he would have been a brilliant light in the Church. He was the one Syrian who made a serious attempt to lift

> "The burden of the mystery,
> . . . the heavy and the weary weight
> Of all this unintelligible world."

But the mediæval chronicler from whom we learn the chief facts of his career concludes with the anathema, "May his name be accursed."

After a period of persecution, during which they were cut off from contact with their brethren on the western side of the desert, the Syrian Christians of Edessa came for a time under the influence of the Greek Church at Antioch. This was owing to the Roman reconquest of their country and temporary absorption of it into the empire in the year 210. On the restoration of communication with Antioch which followed, Serapion, then the bishop of that city, feeling some concern for the isolation of the Syrians and some fear lest they should drift away from the main current of Catholic life, its customs and its beliefs, ordained them a bishop in full sympathy with the Greek Church of Antioch, in the person of Palut—previously mentioned in connection with the early legends—who proceeded to Edessa and took up the succession of the episcopate, which seems to have been interrupted by the persecution. His followers were called "Palutians," a significant fact which indicated a division in the Church, and points to the fact that this interference on the part of Antioch was not at first welcomed by the Syrians. But while the followers of Bardaisan necessarily stood aloof, as did the Marcionites who were also to be found in Mesopotamia now or later, the main body of the Church was soon reconciled. The Palutians, who represented the orthodox Greek Church at Edessa, came to be fused with the rest of the Church, and thus the connection with Antioch generally recognised.

There is no evidence that Serapion had any fault to find with the doctrine taught in this church. He disliked the use of Tatian's Harmony in the public worship, not however because he held it to be a heretical perversion of the Gospels, nor because it came from the hand of a heretic, but simply because it was a compilation, and not the Gospels in their original form as these were used in other churches. Hitherto this was all the people of Edessa knew of the New Testament. They had the Old Testament in Syriac, probably the version of the Old Testament now contained in the Peshitta, which seems to have been a Jewish translation made prior to the founding of a

Christian Church in Mesopotamia; and they had the Diatessaron. That was their Bible. But now Palut brought them a New Testament consisting of the four Gospels, Acts, and the fourteen epistles ascribed to St. Paul, together with a revised edition of the Old Testament. Palut's Syrian Gospels—possibly his own translation, as Mr. Burkitt supposes—appear to be those known to us in the Curetonian and Siniatic manuscripts. They received the title of *Evangelion da Mepharreshe.*[1]

You cannot make a horse drink by taking him to the water, nor can you make a church adopt a new version of Scripture by introducing it to that version, as we have seen in the case of our Revised Version. The Diatessaron was the old Church lesson book of the Syrians; it contained the gospel story on which they had been brought up from their childhood. Palut was quite unable to induce them to give it up in favour of the four Gospels that he had brought them. It continued to be used in Edessa and the other churches of Eastern Syria for more than two centuries after this. Indeed, its popularity grew, and it penetrated farther north as Christianity slowly spread in that direction.

Palut was succeeded by 'Abshelama, and he by Barsamya, who suffered martyrdom under Decius or Valerian (A.D. 250–260). Edessa also suffered from the persecutions under Diocletian and Licinius, when there were at least three martyrs, Shamona, Guria, and Habbib, whose story has been preserved. Then came peace, and for a time there is little to record in the obscure history of the Syrian Church. Three Syriac compositions in particular assigned to the fourth century call for some notice. These are the *Doctrine of Addai*, the *Homilies of Aphraates*, and the *Writings of St. Ephraim*; but the last-named

[1] *i.e.* "The gospel of the separate ones." See Burkitt, *Evangelion da Mepharreshe.* This is much nearer to the Diatessaron than to the later Peshitta, and yet it differs in some respects from the former work, which bears traces of Tatian's Roman residence, in its more or less Western text, agreeing with Codex Bezæ and the old Latin version.

works are the only Syrian patristic writings that have taken a prominent place in ecclesiastical literature. The *Doctrine of Addai* contains the legend of Abgar, the missionary work of *Addai*, that is to say, the apostle Thaddæus, and the labours of his disciple and successor, the martyr Aggai. Although it is manifestly apocryphal and unreliable, it contains much ancient material; but this has been worked over so that in its present form the book cannot be ascribed to an earlier date than the fourth century. Its theology is post-Nicene. The *Homilies of Aphraates* are twenty-two in number, ten of which are asssigned to the year 337, and twelve to the year 344. A separate homily, *On the Cluster*, is assigned to the year following. Aphraates, or Afrahat, was a monk and a bishop said by tradition to be the head of the convent of St. Matthew near Mosul. The Homilies constitute one work which is a systematic exposition of the Christian faith, arranged as an acrostic, each homily beginning with one of the twenty-two letters of the alphabet in order. The work, however, does not consist of speculative theology; it deals chiefly with the relation of faith to the Christian life and to moral conduct, especially emphasising the indwelling of the Spirit of Christ in men, who thus become temples of God.

The Holy Spirit is referred to in the feminine gender, as in the *Gospel according to the Hebrews*, and probably for the same reason; while the Greek word for Spirit is neuter,[1] the Syriac is feminine.[2] But innocent as was the cause of it, this custom easily lends itself to the Gnostic idea of couples. Aphraates holds firmly to the Divinity of Christ; but he defends it in a way that shows how little he is influenced by contemporary discussions among the Greek theologians. Following the remarkable argument of Christ in the Fourth Gospel,[3] he supports the doctrine by appealing to instances of the name of Divinity being given to men. He also uses the *argumentum ad hominem*, urging that it

[1] πνεῦμα. [2] ڕوحا [3] John x. 33–36.

is better to worship Jesus than to worship kings and emperors. He adds that Christ has called us sons, making us His brothers. This is altogether aside from the Homoousian doctrine; it indicates a free handling of the problem untrammelled by the phrases of fixed creeds or the pronouncements of authoritative counsels. And yet, as Mr. Burkitt points out, "on the one hand, he was wholly penetrated by the Monotheism of the Catholic religion; on the other, his loyalty and devotion to his Lord assured him that no title or homage was too exalted for Christians to give to Jesus Christ, through whom they had union with the Divine nature."[1] Nevertheless there is one point at which Aphraates is not only freer and therefore fresher than the standard orthodoxy of the Greeks, but glaringly at variance with Catholic usage and doctrine. This is in his treatment of marriage in relation to baptism. He will only allow celibates to be baptised. He does not regard marriage as a sacrament, nor does it appear that he permits any religious sanction for it. Thus with Aphraates, only virgins, widows, and widowers, or husbands and wives who have separated from one another, may be admitted to the full privilege of the Church, since only the baptised are allowed to come to the communion. Married people then must remain in the outer court of the catechumens, as mere "adherents." He has two grades of Christians; but only the upper grade is really in the Church. This is just like the position taken up by the Marcionites, and later that of the Manichæans. Mr. Burkitt even puts forth the startling theory that at this time it was held by the Church of Edessa as a whole. But we know too little about that church to take its silence as an evidence of its agreement with Aphraates. On the other hand, the silence of Antioch on the subject affords a powerful argument against the hypothesis. Surely the Edessene Christians would have been denounced in no

[1] Burkitt, *Early Eastern Christianity*, to which book, and also its author's *Evangelion da Mepharreshe*, this sketch of earlier Syrian literature is largely indebted.

measured terms by the orthodox Greeks if they had agreed with the Marcionites in this matter.

The last and by far the best known of these Syrian writers is St. Ephraim, commonly called "Ephraim the Syrian." He was a child of Christian parents,[1] born about the year 308 in Mesopotamia, probably at Nisibis. He died at Edessa in the year 373. All sorts of marvels are attributed to him in his youth, and he is credited by his biographer with singular precocity. There is no doubt that he was drawn by the fame of St. Basil to visit that great man at Cæsarea, by whom he was powerfully influenced. The rumour of an invasion of heresy at Edessa sent him back to his native land, where he became a champion of the orthodox faith, but living as an anchorite in his cell. Ephraim's name has obtained prominence in Church history somewhat disproportionate to his ability and achievements. Perhaps this is partly due to the fact that his works have been preserved and that they bulk largely in theological libraries. Still, as a commentator he shows real wisdom, coming between the literalism of Antioch and the allegorising of Alexandria, in endeavouring to bring out the true spiritual significance of Scripture. But he was more popular in his own day as a hymn-writer—why, it is difficult to say, since his hymns are obscure, allusive, prolix, and dreary. He threw his doctrinal teaching into the form of verse, and taught choirs to chant orthodoxy, as Arius had taught his followers to chant heresy. His *Carmina Nisibena* have a more mundane character, for they treat of the struggle between Sapor and the Romans for the possession of Nisibis. The work of Ephraim best known in subsequent times is his *Sermo de Domino*, a treatise on the Incarnation, in which he teaches that the taking of manhood into God was in order that men might receive the Divine nature. Thus he accepts the thoroughly Greek notion of salvation

[1] This is what he says himself, and it must be accepted in opposition to the assertion of his *Acta*, that his father was a priest at a heathen idol temple. See *Opp. Syr.* ii. 499, cited in Smith's *Dict. of Chr. Biog.* vol. ii. p. 137a.

by the Incarnation. At the same time he agrees with the mystical idea of salvation resulting from union with Christ as consisting in the redeemed man becoming a dwelling-place for God. He holds a peculiar doctrine of the *Charismata*, according to which the privileges of Israel are gathered up in Christ and then distributed by Him, so that the ancient grace of the priesthood is thus transmitted to the Christian Church.

A curious Syrian work of an entirely different character written about this time is the *Acts of Judas Thomas*,[1] which tells how the apostle went to India and built a palace for the king in heaven. This is a popular religious story, which Dr. Rendel Harris has shown to be blended with the classic myth of the Dioscuri. The strange notion underlying this story is that Judas, "not Iscariot," but the other apostle Judas, who is named "Thomas," a word which means "twin,"[2] was the twin-brother of Jesus.[3] The book has been regarded as heretical; and it agrees with Aphraates in requiring celibacy in the baptised. Evidently, then, there was a strong tendency in that direction at Edessa, although it cannot be proved that this entirely dominated the Church in that city even during its free and independent age. The novel contains some mystical elements in the prayers attributed to St. Thomas, indicating that like Aphraates its author was not fettered by the phraseology of Catholic orthodoxy, simply because he was a member of a church that was developing on its own lines without interference from the main body of Christendom.

With the Acts of Thomas is associated a Syrian Christian poem known as the *Hymn of the Soul*, originally a separate composition but now incorporated in the story. It is not really a hymn at all, but an allegory in verse telling of the adventures of the soul which has come from

[1] Wright's *Apocryphal Acts*, pp. 159–165.

[2] Θωμᾶς = תאומא. So we read three times in the Fourth Gospel, Θωμᾶς ὁ λεγόμενος Δίδυμος, John xi. 16, xx. 24, xxi. 2.

[3] See Rendel Harris, *The Dioscuri in the Christian Legends*.

its heavenly home to earth and is performing tasks assigned to it as the way for its return. This idea is worked out in the form of the pilgrimage of a prince to Egypt in quest of the serpent-guarded pearl.

Thus far, then, we have seen the Syrian Church at Edessa going its own way and working out its own ideas of Christian truth and life, no doubt with the "mediocrity" of ability which, as Renan says, characterises everything Syriac, and certainly without producing any really great men, but still with a certain freedom, originality, and variety that interest us in contrast with the growing uniformity of Catholic standards in the main body of the Church. Early in the fourth century this isolation was disturbed, and for the second time the Eastern Syrian Church was brought more into line with the orthodox Greek Church at Antioch. This was the work of the great ecclesiastic Rabbulas, a native of Chalcis (*Quinnesrîn*, *i.e.*, "Eagle's Nest") in Syria, who had a heathen priest for his father but a Christian mother. Having come to personal decision for his mother's religion, he went to Jerusalem and then down to the Jordan to be baptised. On his return he renounced his wife and his property, sent his children to convent schools, and went first to the monastery of St. Abraham at Chalcis, and, since that was not severe enough for him, afterwards to a cave in the desert, where he lived the life of a hermit. Thus he won fame in the Church, and in the year 411 he had his reward. He was then appointed bishop of Edessa by a synod at Antioch. Rabbulas proved to be an energetic disciplinarian, especially aiming at correcting the irregularities, that is to say, the national or local peculiarities, of his diocese, by bringing his flock into line with the Greek-speaking Church. With this end in view he made a dead set against the Diatessaron, ordering it to be removed from all the churches, and commanding the four separate Gospels to be substituted for it. But he did not circulate the old Syriac gospels of Palut; his gospels were in a text more nearly agreeing with the Syrian Greek text used at Antioch in his day.

This was the text of the Peshitta, which does not appear in earlier Syrian writings, but which henceforth becomes the text of Syrian Christian literature. It is reasonable, therefore, to infer that it was Rabbulas who introduced the Peshitta New Testament, which was to be used as the recognised version of the Church, as the Syrian "Vulgate."

CHAPTER II

THE SYRIAN NESTORIANS

Zachariah of Mitylene, *Chronicle* (Eng. trans. in "Byzantine Texts," 1899); Asseman, *Biblioth. Oriental.* tome iv.; Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, chap. xlvii.; Badger, *Nestorians and their Ritual*, 1862.; *The Book of Governors*; The *Historia Monastica* of Thomas, bishop of Marga, A.D. 840, edited from Syrian manuscripts, etc., by G. Wallis Budge, 1893; Etheridge, *Syrian Churches*, 1846; Nöldeke *Geschichte der Persen.*

THE rise and progress of the Nestorians offers us one of the greatest surprises in history. By condemning them as heretics the council of Ephesus (A.D. 431) unwittingly gave them their opportunity. Church councils have succeeded in crushing movements which had not obtained much popular support. But no decree of a council has ever destroyed a powerful heresy. The great days of Arianism came after it had been anathematised by the Nicene Council. The case of Nestorianism is even more significant. The triumph of the Arians was due to imperial patronage; but the Nestorians were not favoured with that encouragement. Cast out of the empire, they brought fresh life to the Syrian Church beyond its borders, and stimulated an enthusiastic missionary movement which rapidly spread eastward like a prairie fire, covering wide areas of Central Asia.

Cyril of Alexandria had snatched a victory at Ephesus by a stroke of smart tactics;[1] but he was too astute a politician to deceive himself with the supposition that this had ended his difficulties. Having secured the condemnation of Nestorius, he was not unwilling to conciliate the

[1] See p. 96.

arch-heretic's friends and supporters, the most important of whom was John, the patriarch of Antioch, whom he had affronted by hurrying through the council's discussions before the arrival of that important personage. But the negotiations began on the Nestorian side under the influence of an august power to which all parties paid deference. The emperor interfered as peacemaker, and at his command Paul of Emesa, who had belonged hitherto to the Nestorian party, visited Cyril at Alexandria (A.D. 432), and explained the Syrian view in such a way as to allow of the uniting of the two natures in Christ while each retained its individuality pure and unmixed. A compact was now made, according to which Cyril assented to this statement, while John and his party were to acquiesce in the condemnation of Nestorius—the Jonah cast out to end the storm. His disciples were called Simonians, his books burned, and the heretic himself driven away first to Petra, then to the Fayûm oasis.

After this the centre of Nestorianism passes over to Edessa. Ibas, a presbyter in that church, and according to some accounts the head of the theological school, now an important seat of learning, had been present at the council of Ephesus as a supporter of Nestorius. Rabbulas, his bishop, had also been there, and at first friendly to the Nestorian position; but he had subsequently gone over decidedly to the other side. In making this change, however, he did not carry his people with him, and Ibas, as leader of the Nestorian party at Edessa, had the great majority of the church with him. Ibas then wrote a letter, of which much was made later, to Maris, then or later bishop of Hardaschir in Persia, in which he gave a graphic account of the council of Ephesus and also defined his position—on the one hand condemning Nestorius for approaching the Unitarianism of Paul of Samosata, and on the other hand condemning Cyril for Apollinarianism; both inaccurate charges. Rabbulas died in the year 435 (or 436), and Ibas was then carried to the bishopric by the voice of the popular party which he represented. The

case was now serious, for although he had repudiated Nestorius, the newly appointed bishop of Edessa was the leading living supporter of essential Nestorianism. He had translated the works of Theodore of Mopsuestia, the real author of the heresy. Thus that system came to have its headquarters at Edessa under the patronage of the chief ecclesiastic of the Eastern Syrian Church. Four disaffected presbyters now headed a party in opposition, and compelled Domnus, who had succeeded his uncle John in the patriarchate of Antioch, and was friendly to Ibas, reluctantly to summon a synod for hearing the charges against him. Some of them were trivial, as that he used inferior wine at the Eucharist, but among them was the grave accusation of Nestorianism. However, nothing was decided, and the case was postponed. The presbyters then resorted to Constantinople and appealed to the emperor, who ordered a trial by an imperial commission of bishops at Tyre—of course quite contrary to ecclesiastical rules and rights. These commissioners endeavoured to effect a reconciliation. But the peace they secured on the spot did not last. The Eutychian party was now rising in power. When Ibas returned home he found the minds of his flock poisoned with adverse notions. Under orders from Constantinople, Chæreas, the civil governor of Osrhoene, arrested him on the charges the presbyters had urged against him. Monks and nuns of the opposing party joined in the hue and cry, eager to hound him to death. He was a "second Judas"; an "enemy of Christ"; an "offshoot of Pharaoh." "To the fire with him and all his race!" they cried. Ibas was removed by the emperor's soldiers, but as only a synod could depose him, this was subsequently done by "the robber council" at Ephesus, where he was again denounced by the fierce monks as a "second Judas" and "veritable Satan." Subsequently, at the council of Chalcedon (A.D. 451), under the new emperor, Marcian, he was pardoned on condition that he anathematised both Nestorius and Eutyches, and accepted the Tome of Leo. Nevertheless he had not changed his views, and his people

knew it. To this day he is anathematised as a Nestorian by the Jacobites in their profession of faith.

Meanwhile the Nestorian movement was spreading farther north and east. Rabbulas had expelled a scholar Barsumas, who was connected with the theological school at Edessa, and who then went to Nisibis in Persian territory, where he became bishop (A.D. 435). There he established a theological school which was essentially Nestorian in character. The original Syrian school at the capital was never purged of Nestorianism. Thus there were now two seats of learning from which the obnoxious tenets were disseminated, till the Edessa school was finally suppressed by the emperor in the year 489 on account of its heresy. Like the Huguenots after the revocation of the edict of Nantes, who brought the silk trade to England, like the Pilgrim Fathers who carried the best of Puritan energy out of England to found a new world, the Nestorians came to Mesopotamia with the arts and crafts of life. Carpenters, smiths, weavers, the best of the artisan class, they came to start industries and lay the foundations of manufacturing prosperity in the land of their adoption. Then the expulsion of Nestorians from the great school at Edessa—"the Athens of Syria," as Gibbon calls it—led to the propagation of their teaching in the remote regions of their travels. They did not go merely as exiles. As in the story of the Jerusalem Christians driven from their homes by the persecution of Herod, their very troubles converted them into missionaries. At home they were denounced as heretics; abroad, where no rumours of miserable doctrinal disputes were heard, they simply journeyed as enthusiastic missionaries of the gospel. And they were wonderfully successful, winning converts in one district after another as they penetrated further and yet further into the unknown lands of Asia.

In the first place this influx of Nestorians gave a great impulse to Christianity in Persia. Two influences combined to make that successful. The mere increase in numbers, the infusion of fresh blood, and the zeal and devotion of

men who were exiles for their faith, stimulated the churches which they found beyond the Euphrates into vigour, and led to the planting of new churches. Then, further, their advent changed the policy of the Persian government towards the Christians. In former times this had been adverse, sometimes to the extent of carrying on devastating persecutions.[1] The Magi had roused opposition to the Christians on religious grounds, in the interest of Zoroastrianism, and the kings had been ready to resort to violence because they had regarded the Church in Persia as an ally of their standing enemy the Roman Empire. But now the case was different. It is true that at first the renewed vigour of Persian Christianity produced by the advent of the Nestorians provoked a fresh outbreak of persecution under King Firuz or Peroz (A.D. 465). But since it was directed against the Catholics it went on the old lines of oppressing the clients and suspected allies of the orthodox Byzantine Church, which was closely associated with the Byzantine government. Before long, however, the original Christians joined hands with the Nestorians, and the newcomers, fusing themselves into the ancient Church, effectually leavened it with their doctrine, so that the Persian Church became Nestorian. By yielding so completely to the influence of the immigrants, the Christians of Persia came under the ecclesiastical ban of excommunication which had been pronounced by the Catholic Church at Ephesus and reiterated at Chalcedon. They were all heretics out of communion with Rome, and also with Constantinople, Antioch, and Alexandria. Accordingly they ceased altogether to be in any way politically dangerous to Persia as friends and allies of the empire. On the contrary, the Persian government and the Nestorian Church saw a common enemy in the Byzantine Empire. It was to their interest to draw together in mutual self-defence against attacks from the dreaded foe. The Magian opposition, which rested on other grounds, would not be affected by this change in the political kaleidoscope. But a spirit of conciliation

[1] See p. 299.

leading to mutual concessions softened the antagonism here also. Perhaps under the influence of Zoroastrianism, which recognised only good in nature and considered the source of evil to be a spiritual power, the Nestorians abandoned the rigour of Catholic asceticism. At a synod held in the year 499, presided over by Babæus, the metropolitan of Seleucia and Ctesiphon, they abolished all clerical celibacy, even permitting bishops to marry. It was reported of them by the orthodox as a great scandal that some of them married repeatedly. Second marriages were always looked upon with disfavour in the orthodox Church; though permitted to the laity, they were absolutely forbidden to the clergy. In the Greek Church the bishops were celibate, while the parish popes were required to be married, but only once. But now among the Nestorians not only were the bishops permitted to marry, but if they lost a first wife, to marry again, and thus to have a licence in the matter not even permitted to the lower clergy in the main body of the Eastern Church. The situation was regarded with professional horror among the orthodox bishops. The arrangement seems to have worked well in the Persian Church, for that Church continued to flourish and expand. It was virtually identical with the Syrian Church at Edessa, although not always under the same civil government. Now we saw that Aphraates advocated celibacy as a condition of baptism.[1] How far this view had been adopted by the main body of the Eastern Syrian Christians cannot be determined from the scanty information at our disposal. But at all events it seems clear that a great change must have come over that church when under Nestorian influences for it to have acquiesced in, and apparently adopted, the daring innovation of the complete abolition not only of baptismal celibacy, but even of clerical celibacy.[2] This liberty has since been abolished in the Nestorian Church, which has assimilated its custom to that of the Greek Church, in requiring its bishops to be

[1] See p. 472.

[2] See Lea, *Clerical Celibacy*, vol. i. pp. 98, 99.

without wives. The precise time when marriage was prohibited to the higher clergy has not been ascertained. The catholicos Mar Abd Yeshua, writing in the seventh century, has a chapter on marriage and virginity, in which no restriction is assigned to clerical marriage. A work called *Bebboreetha*, by Schlémon, the metropolitan of Bosra, refers to several wives of patriarchs. Another work states that the metropolitan of Nisibis about the twelfth century, himself a married man, convened a synod which decreed that bishops should be allowed to marry.[1] This shows that there were opponents of episcopal marriage in the Syrian Church at that time, although they proved only to be a minority who could be thwarted by a synod.

The Nestorian Church in Eastern Syria and Persia was organised under an archbishop usually known as the catholicos; and in the year 498 the catholicos assumed the title of "Patriarch of the East." He was fully justified in wearing this proud title. As a Nestorian heretic he was entirely free from the patriarchate of Antioch, which from time to time had claimed to exercise jurisdiction over Mesopotamia, but which had now cut off and anathematised all his Church. On the other hand, the wide and continuous extension of Christianity in the Far East as a result of the labours of the Nestorian missionaries was giving him an immense extent of patriarchal territory, for all the converts in the new districts were taught to look to the catholicos as their ecclesiastical head. The seat of the patriarchate was at the twin-cities of Seleucia and Ctesiphon, one of which was on the western and the other on the eastern bank of the Tigris. These cities together formed the centre of trade and travel between Europe and Western Asia on one side, and India and China on the other. Caravans with Oriental products destined to minister to the luxury of more prosperous nations, came back from visits to the industrious populations of those mysterious distant empires of which as yet Europe knew little, and displayed their wares in the bazaars of this great emporium.

[1] Badger, vol. ii. pp. 180, 181.

It was a magnificent centre for the missionary Church that was now beginning to enter on its great task of carrying the gospel to the Far East.

At first the reinvigorated Syrian Christians repudiated the name Nestorian. This was not because they were unwilling to accept the doctrines taught by Nestorius, but simply because they had no connection with the deposed patriarch of Alexandria. They had learnt the scheme of Christology with which his name was associated more from the writings of Theodore, its real founder and Nestorius's teacher, and from others of the same school. But they were not willing to have their position represented even in this way. They did not regard themselves as persons won over to a new doctrine. They maintained that the ideas now anathematised by the Greek Church were genuine, original Christian truths. Accordingly the catholicos Ebed-Jesu declared that it might rather be said that Nestorius followed them than that they were led by him.[1]

We must not suppose that the Nestorian tide of immigration entirely swept away the ascetic ideal, which had been so very marked as to be almost Marcionite in some quarters, at all events during the earlier days of the Church of Edessa. We have a remarkable testimony to the contrary in the chronicle of a Nestorian monk now available for the English reader. This is the *Book of Governors*, written by Thomas, bishop of Marga, and dated in the year 840, which Dr. Wallis Budge has edited in the Syriac, translated into English, and published. Thomas has here done for the Syrian monks what Palladius did for the Egyptian monks. His work is worthy of a place by the side of the *Paradise*[2] for its first-hand account of ancient

[1] Etheridge, *The Syrian Churches*, p. 72. Etheridge states that even to-day they object to the title "Nestorian." But Badger cites instances of the use of it in more modern times. For example, in the year 1609 Mar Abd Yeshua drew up "the orthodox creed of the Nestorians," stating that he did so "in the blessed city of Khlât in the church of the blessed Nestorians" (*The Nestorians and their Ritual*, vol. i. p. 178). Layard states that the name was first given by the Roman Catholic missionaries (*Nineveh and its Remains*, vol. i. p. 259); but Badger shows that it had been used earlier.

[2] See p. 153.

monasticism. It gives us valuable information about an important part of the Nestorian Church at the most obscure period of its history. In reading the book we are brought right back into the atmosphere of this old Syrian monasticism, and are able to see the real, human, distinctive figures of a large number of its representative men, and to examine the manners and customs of their communities with much detail.[1]

Syrian monasticism originated in Egyptian monasticism —the scene and centre of the earliest ascetic life in the Church. It appears to have begun with Awgin, who sprang from an Egyptian family residing on an island near the spot where Suez now stands, and who was originally a pearl fisher. This man became a disciple of Pachomius. He subsequently settled at Nisibis, and there gathered about him a number of ascetics. The date of his death is

[1] The first question that rises on the perusal of such a book—so new to most English-speaking students of Church history—is that of its genuineness and freedom from interpolations. It abounds in miracles; but that was only to be expected. No monkish chronicle of the ninth century could have been free from miracle, and any non-miraculous chronicle of this period would be *ipso facto* spurious. It is somewhat disconcerting, however to find that the four MSS. out of which Dr. Budge has constructed his text are all modern. These MSS. are (*a*) British Museum, Oriental, 2,316, probably written in the early part of the seventeenth century; (*b* and *c*) MS. in Dr. Budge's possession, both written in 1888; (*d*) Vat., in the Vatican library, No. clxv., written A.D. 1663. We see then that of the four MSS. on which Dr. Budge relies, the two oldest were written in the seventeenth century, and the other two in the year 1888. Dr. Budge does not indicate in any way the sources of the latter, though surely it should be possible to discover what these were. In addition, he mentions three other MSS., now in Europe, which he does not date and which apparently he has not collated. Dr. Budge is satisfied that the text has not been tampered with, because his four MSS. agree—except for ordinary various readings. But that fact is no proof that they might not all be derived from a common source which was not sound. A better ground of assurance in the substantial genuineness of the documents is their internal characteristics. (1) The narrative fits into the circumstances of the times. (2) The writer does not hesitate to record what is discreditable to his monks—a point in favour of an early date. A later Syrian writer would be likely to suppress discreditable incidents. On the whole, therefore, probably we may accept this book as Thomas's genuine record. If anybody would take the trouble to apply the principles of the Higher Criticism to it, he might lead us to a more conclusive verdict.

given as A.D. 363. The one monastery founded by Awgin is credited with having sent out no less than seventy-two missionaries. We may regard him as the St. Columba of Syrian monasticism.

Two other monasteries are known to have been instituted in Mesopotamia before the end of the fourth century. Therefore by the time of Thomas this Eastern Syrian monasticism was already more than four hundred years old. Meanwhile it had been absorbed in the great Nestorian movement that had taken over the Church in Mesopotamia. So Thomas was a Nestorian and the monks about whom he wrote were Nestorians, although it would be difficult to discover the fact from his book, which is far removed from theological controversies.

Thomas tells us that he came to the monastery of Bêth 'Abhê when a young man, in the year A.D. 832; and his book is concerned with the monks and chiefly the governors of this monastery. It has since disappeared and the exact site of it has not been recovered, though it is known to have been situated somewhere among the mountains not far from the Upper or Great Zab, on its right bank, in a bleak region where fruit trees could not be cultivated. According to Thomas, the monastery was founded by Rabban Jacob, originally a monk of Mount Izla (A.D. 595 or 596); but inasmuch as this man found some monks there, we must conclude that it was a more ancient centre for a group of ascetics' huts or caves. Under Jacob and his successors it grew into a very important monastery. It would seem that its inmates were men of high social position, and that they cultivated learning as well as asceticism. Many of them belonged to noble Persian and Arab families. The library contained a large collection of books, among which was Thomas's favourite work, the *Paradise* of Palladius, translated in the seventh century by Anan Isho, a monk of the great monastery of Izla, near Nisibis, who had made a pilgrimage to the Scetic desert, the home of ancient asceticism. The daily services were seven in number—just before sunset, at dusk, at midnight,

at daybreak, and through the day; and at these services lessons from the Old and New Testaments were read, collects said, and hymns, anthems, and responses sung. This was the general custom in Nestorian monasteries, which followed in the main the usual monastic routine observed in other branches of the Eastern Church. There was no set and recognised scheme of music. Each monastery or church had its own tunes. The monastery was supported partly by endowments and partly by the labour of its monks. Soon after the time of Thomas it began to decline, owing to oppressive Mohammedan taxation and also through the violent aggression of the Arabs, who seized neighbouring land and villages. Thomas obtained his information through being secretary to Mar Abraham, the governor of the monastery in his day. Subsequently he became bishop of Marga—from which fact he comes to be known as "Thomas of Marga"; and later still he was honoured with the title of "Metropolitan of Bêth Garmai."

After his apology and introduction, Thomas begins his narrative with an account of the monastery of Mount Izla and the unfortunate happenings there which led to Jacob's removal to Bêth ʿAbhê. This story is important both on its own account and for the light it throws on the circumstances of the times. The monks were allowed to live in scattered cells and more or less widely separated villages, although under the common rule of the governor. Even then the lack of communication is remarkable. It was found that the monks in one of these outlying villages were married. According to one account, a visitor saw the children playing about in the street. The domestic life was carried on without fear or reproach, and this comfortable arrangement continued for a number of years without any attempt at stopping it. At length the scandal was discovered by a monk named Elijah, a fierce, uncompromising ascetic, who determined to have what he described as "the gangrene" cut away. So the story stands in Thomas's book. But it is scarcely possible to

believe that the village had been so completely hidden that no rumour of its doings had got abroad. The reasonable explanation is that this was known and was connived at by the governor all along.

That such a condition of things could have been going on quite openly, unmolested and unrebuked for years, in connection with a monastery, must strike the reader who has only been accustomed to monasticism in the Roman Catholic and orthodox Churches as simply amazing. It was not so remarkable in Mesopotamia, for it was quite in line with the Nestorian disregard of asceticism which allowed the marriage of bishops. But now comes this stern censor denouncing the married monks with the spirit of a Hildebrand, or like a Nehemiah commanding the Israelites to send away their foreign wives. He expostulates with the governor for not having stopped the scandal, "while in this Divine inheritance Sodom is being raised to life again, and Geba rebuilt."[1] The upshot is that the offending monks with their wives and children were expelled and their huts burned. But this was not all. Not so far away there lived the holy Rabban Mar Jacob, whom Thomas characterises as "the most meek and humble of all men, who knew not that any sin besides his own existed in creation, whose eye was pure, and who never perceived wickedness in his neighbour."[2] Was there ever a more lovely description of a Christian soul than this account of the seventh century Nestorian monk among the mountains of Eastern Syria? He was as different as possible from the fierce Elijah, and that self-elected reformer charged Jacob with conniving at the abomination. Although the good man had known nothing of it, according to Thomas, or had never suspected harm in it, as we may more probably conclude, he was driven from the monastery almost broken-hearted. After wandering about for a time Jacob came to Bêth ʿAbhê. But this expulsion of a perfectly innocent man was not to be taken lightly. The monks made a great commotion at

[1] *Book of Governors*, Book I. chap. x. [2] *Ibid.* chap. xii.

the injustice of it, and many of them left in indignation to become the founders of various other monasteries at Nineveh, Erzerûm, and the country lying between the upper and lower Zab rivers, till, as Thomas says, "they filled the country of the East with monasteries, and convents, and habitations of monks, and Satan who had rejoiced at their discomfiture was put to shame."[1]

The second abbot of Bêth ʿAbhê was John, an author of some repute, who left a chronicle, rules for novices, maxims, etc. He was succeeded by Paul, who lived through a good part of the troublous times of King Khusrau's wars with the Greeks and witnessed a persecution of the Christians. In the year 647 Isho-yahbh became catholicos, and he greatly enriched the monastery, building a splendid church and adding other accessories. A second Hyppolytus, he was the author of a "Refutation of Heretical Opinions." Some of the monks were rigid ascetics in spite of the laxity of Nestorianism. Thomas tells us that Cyriacus the eighteenth abbot used to stand all night with one knee "bent like a camel," and fastened with a leather strap. It is more edifying to learn how earnestly the necessity of labour was insisted on. Thus in Canon i. of Mar Abraham we read, "Quietness then is preserved by these two causes, namely, constant reading and prayer, or by the labour of the hands and meditation"; and he adds, "Let us flee from idleness, which is a thing that causeth loss, being firmly persuaded that, if we allow it to remain it will be impossible for us either to bear leaves or to yield fruit, if indeed it happen not that we be altogether cut off from the life of the fear of God."[2]

Thomas narrates how the catholicos Isho-yahbh, accompanied by some of his bishops, was sent by the Persian King Sheroe[3] to endeavour to bring about peace

[1] *Ibid.* chap. xiv.

[2] *Ibid.* vol. i. Introd. p. cxxv.

[3] Thomas calls him "the good King Sheroe." In point of fact, although overtures of peace had been made to Heraclius by Sheroe, it was the Queen Boran, daughter of Khusrau Parwey who despatched the embassy. See Budge, *The Book of Governors*, vol. ii. p. 125, note 2.

with the Byzantine Greeks. In connection with this embassy he tells a story which reflects as little credit on his own sense of honesty as on that of the head of his Church. While "these holy men," passing through the city of Antioch, were resting in one of the churches, the catholicos observed a white casket marked with the sign of the cross, which contained bones and portions of the bodies of the blessed apostles. Observing what mighty deeds were wrought by these relics, Isho-yahbh prayed earnestly that he might have the treasure to take to his own country. Having vexed and tortured himself with all manner of schemes to get hold of it and not being able to succeed, notwithstanding his Oriental subtlety, he put the matter in the hands of God to protect him while he did his best to secure the coveted casket. Then he stole it and carried it back with him to Persia. Thomas does not express the least disapproval of this transaction. On the contrary, he tells his story with gusto, evidently ascribing it to the honour of the catholicos that his trust in God enabled him to accomplish the theft.

The monastery of Bêth ʿAbhê was subsequently disturbed by the Euchites. The branch of these people, the "praying monks," in Syria, there called Messalians, cherished a severe doctrine of original sin together with little faith in the efficacy of sacraments. Everybody was born with a demon united to his soul, which prompted him to evil and which was not exorcised by baptism, that rite only clipping off the offence of actual transgressions "as with shears while the root of the evil still remained behind."[1] The remedy was prayer, constant, uninterrupted prayer. The consequence was that the Euchites abandoned labour, ceased to work for their bread like other monks, lived by begging, lay about in the streets, and spent much of their time in sleep. Women mixed with men in the wandering companies of the Euchites, and charges of immorality amounting to promiscuous intercourse were brought against them on that account, but apparently on no other evidence.[2] Neander

[1] Timotheus, *De recept. hær.* i. 2. [2] See Epiphanius, *Hær.* 80.

calls them "the first mendicant Friars."[1] They are said to have believed that prayer drove out the demons as spittle, mucus from the nose, or in the form of a serpent or a sow with a litter of pigs. But probably these absurdities resulted from taking their metaphors literally. A more dangerous and not improbable error was the perfectionism to which they inclined. And yet, like Wesley's doctrine of Christian perfection, this may have been a stimulating ideal rather than a vain boast. The first leader of the party was a layman of Mesopotamia named Adelphius. Flavian, the patriarch of Antioch, induced him when an old man to make a confidant of an aged bishop who was really a spy. The Euchite doctrine being thus meanly extracted, Adelphius and his followers were beaten, excommunicated, and banished. From Syria they went to Pamphylia. Condemned over and over again by various local synods, they persisted, and flourished in spite of scorn and hatred. The council of Ephesus confirmed the synod's condemnation of the party, and anathematised a Messalian book called *Asceticus*. Subsequently the Euchites had a leader named Lampetus, after whom they were sometimes called Lampetians; later still they were called Marcianists, after a leader of the party in the sixth century named Marcian. They lingered on till they mingled with the Bogomiles.[2] In the fourteenth century there was a revival of Euchite ideas and practices among the monks of Mount Athos.

If the charge of immorality—so common in the case of heretics and so generally baseless—was a cruel libel, the only serious objection to these Euchites in the eyes of the modern world would be their idleness. But their slighting the sacraments, to which is to be added the fact that they objected to the choral services of the Church, would be quite enough to account for their condemnation by their contemporaries. We may regard them, however, as simple pietists, in some way allied to Puritanism, in some respects anticipating Quaker views, in some degree approaching the modern devotees of what has been called "the higher life."

[1] *Church Hist.* vol. iii. section IV. i.

[2] See p. 225.

Somewhat similar to the Euchites were the Eustathians, followers of Eustathius, bishop of Sebaste in Armenia, who broke up homes, and induced husbands, wives, children, and servants to go off with the wandering bands. They would partake of no sacrament administered by a married priest. For the same reason they would not meet for worship in the house of a married man.

CHAPTER III

THE LATER NESTORIANS, THE CHALDÆANS, AND THE JACOBITES

(*a*) Thomas of Marga, *Historia Monastica* (edited by Budge, 1893); John of Ephesus, *Ecclesiastical History* (trans. by Payne Smith); Zachariah, *Syriac Chronicle*, Eng. trans., 1899; Asseman, *Biblioth. Oriental*, tomes ii. and iv.

(*b*) Etheridge, *Syrian Churches*, 1846; Badger, *Nestorians and their Ritual*, 1862.

THE NESTORIANS.

DURING the earlier part of its history the Nestorian Church in the Persian Empire went through the trying experience of alternate patronage and persecution. It is difficult to say which was the more hurtful to it. The patronage was continuous over long periods of time; the persecution took the form of sudden outbreaks of massacre. When the monarch smiled on the Church he took good care to keep it well in hand, appointing his own nominee as catholicos and deposing him if he did not give satisfaction. The Persian Nestorians being at feud with the orthodox Greeks in the Byzantine Empire, it was profitable to the king of Persia for the quarrel between the two Churches to come to the assistance of the antagonism between the two empires. But while this might suit the purposes of the sovereign, it was by no means pleasing to the Magi, who saw in the Church their deadly rival. Therefore whenever the Magian influence got the upper hand the Christians had to suffer. In consequence of one of these persecutions, which began in the year 608, the office of catholicos was vacant for twenty

years, at the end of which time of gloom and desolation it was restored in the person of Jesu-Jabus,[1] who lived to see the fall of the royal house of the Sassanidæ (A.D. 651). During the patriarchate of Jesu-Jabus, Persia was overwhelmed by the Mohammedan tide of conquest, the consequence of which was oppression under a more anti-Christian tyranny than that of the Zoroastrian rulers it superseded. But this has not always been equally severe. The catholicos obtained from the caliph an assurance of protection for the Christians, with a right to practise their religion on the usual condition of paying tribute. He even got better terms from Omar at a later time, having the tribute remitted. The next caliph, Ibn Abi· Taleb, confirmed these privileges in a charter which expressed polite esteem for the Christianity of the Nestorians. No doubt, like his predecessors the Persian kings, he was astute enough to perceive the wisdom of favouring the heretics, both for the sake of weakening the Christian cause by means of divisions, and on account of the close alliance between the orthodox Church, which repudiated them, and the Byzantine Empire. In the year 762, under the enlightened caliphate of Bagdad, the Nestorian catholicos removed to that city, then a centre of learning and science, and there the Christian prelate lived on good terms with the Mussulman despot.[2]

During the next five hundred years the Nestorian Church was allowed to go its own way, sometimes with kindly recognition from liberal caliphs, sometimes harassed by harsh tyrants, but still all the time a recognised institution within the territory of Islam. Then came the terrible barbaric invasions, which threatened to sweep civilisation away in the regions of the Greek Empire, and which brought a night of three centuries on the opening day of Russian Christianity. Their influence on the Mohammedan countries has not been noted with so much concern, and yet it would have been tremendous if these conquering heathen hordes had not been rapidly absorbed into Islam, with the ultimate result that the Turkish superseded the Arab rule

[1] Asseman, tome iv. p. 87.

[2] *Ibid.* iv. pp. 94 ff.

over the lands that Mohammed and his successors had won by the sword. In the year 1258, Hulaku Khan, the nephew of Genghis Khan, took Bagdad, and put an end to the caliphate in that city. He was the son of a Christian mother and he had a Christian wife. Indeed, he entered into negotiations with the pope and with the kings of France and England with a view to an alliance against the Saracens. Several of his successors publicly professed themselves as Christians; others stood for Islam. Their power rapidly declined. Meanwhile, although the Nestorians were now very numerous, their moral influence was weakened and their church life degenerated. This unsatisfactory state of affairs continued for nearly a hundred and fifty years. We are now at the end of the fourteenth century—a time of overwhelming calamities. Another wave of invasion from the steppes of Asia next appeared, led by the dreadful Timour, who seized and sacked Bagdad, Aleppo, and Damascus about the year 1400. He presented himself as a champion of Islam with a policy very different from the Tartar khans of Bagdad; for Timour savagely attacked the Syrian Christians, many of whom he captured, while those who succeeded in escaping fled to the inaccessible mountains of Kurdistan. It was the break-up of the ancient Syrian Church that had had so large a share in the history of Mesopotamia and wide areas farther north and east for a thousand years. The Nestorians still lingered on; they have remained to the present day; but they have never recovered their ancient power and prestige.[1]

A curious account of the Nestorians is given by Albiruni, a Mohammedan writer who lived at Khiva between A.D. 973 and 1048. He contrasts them with the Catholic party on account of their superior intellectual activity, saying, "Nestorius instigated people to examine for themselves, and to use the instruments of logic and analogy in meeting their opponents."[2] This author

[1] See Asseman, tome iv. p. 138 ff.

[2] *Chronology of Ancient Nations*, translated by E. Sachau (Oriental Translation Fund, 1879), p. 306.

states that they agree with the Melchites[1] in the observance of Lent, Christmas, and Epiphany, but differ from them as to all other feasts and fasts. At the feast of *Ma'al'tha*,[2] he tells us, "They wander from the nave of their churches up to the roof in memory of the return of the Israelites to Jerusalem," an indication of Jewish associations on the part of the Nestorians. Albiruni declared that the majority of the inhabitants of Syria, Irak, and Khurasan were Nestorians.

The lot of the Nestorians in modern times is pitiable. In the year 1843 four thousand of them were massacred by the Kurds. Layard describes his visit to a ghastly scene of skeletons, skulls, scattered bones, rotting garments on rocks and bushes and ledges of a precipice over which men, women, and children had been hurled. Everywhere he found villages devastated and churches in ruins, or, if in some cases they were roughly rebuilt, the people afraid to use them, because the patriarch was in prison and unable to reconsecrate the desecrated houses of worship.

The wonder is that these oppressed people, excommunicated by the Greek Church and persecuted by their Mussulman neighbours, still retain their loyalty to what they believe to be the faith once delivered to the saints, even to the extent of martyrdom. They have very little to encourage them in what Protestants would call "the means of grace." Their liturgies are in old Syriac, which is unintelligible to the people of the present day—except where, as Layard says, it is translated into the vernacular. They hear no preaching. Their chief religious functions are fasts, of which there are 153 in the year. One consequence of their isolation is that, while they have sunk into ignorance, they have not degenerated in doctrine and ritual to the same extent as more active churches. They have no doctrine of transubstantiation, no purgatory; they do not sanction Mariolatry or image worship; nor

[1] The orthodox, as the party of the "king," *i.e.* the Byzantine emperor, a title applied to them in contrast to Nestorians.

[2] *Ingressus.*

will they even allow icons to be exhibited in their churches. Men and women take the communion in both kinds. All five orders of clergy below the bishops are permitted to marry. Dr. Layard could not find any convents either for men or for women.

Thus in many respects the modern Nestorians are nearer to European Protestantism than to Roman Catholicism. While those who have succumbed to the Jesuit missions are bound to accept the full Western doctrine —if they really know what that is—the sturdy resistance of the old Nestorians to the papal pretensions throws them into an attitude which is essentially protestant. But they are neither Lutheran nor Calvinistic. They have any essential Western Protestantism in their constitution. Such ideas of Luther as the priesthood of all Christians and justification by faith are quite unknown to these scattered communities of the primitive Syrian Church. In their daily life the Syrian and Persian Nestorians have the reputation of being superior to their Mohammedan neighbours. They are honest, thrifty, perhaps even parsimonious. Such people are well worthy of the sympathy and assistance of their more fortunate and more enlightened fellow-Christians. The first necessity is to protect them from oppression and outrage. What they need is education, not ecclesiastical proselytising. They are said not to know the elements of the gospel. Then the best action of friendly English or American churches would be to evangelise them by teaching them the contents of their own Scriptures. Some good work of this kind is already going on under the American missionaries.

One cause of the weakening of this ancient Syrian Church may be found in its divisions. In particular there are the Chaldæans and the Jacobites.

The Chaldæans.

The sect known as the "Chaldæans" is of recent origin, having originated in the year 1681, when the Nestorian

patriarch of Diarbekir, having quarrelled with the catholicos, turned to the pope, who consecrated him "patriarch of the Chaldæans," thus creating the new office on his own authority. This movement was the result of a Jesuit mission in the East, and the Chaldæans are a sect springing out of the influence of that mission.[1] The Crusades raised hopes on the part of the papacy that if the stubborn Greek Church could not be induced to bow the neck to the pope, the Nestorians who were anathematised by that church might join hands with the Latin Church. Their very antagonism to the Byzantines might induce them to have friendly feelings towards the rival communion. Accordingly efforts were made to win over the Nestorians in the year 1247, and again some forty years later; but though Eastern courtesy or suppleness at first deceived the papal missionaries with hopes of success, these were doomed to disappointment. Nothing more was done for more than three hundred years. Then, in the year 1552, a large secession from the Nestorian Church took place on the question of the election of a catholicos. The office had long been hereditary; but at length a considerable body of clergy objected to this unhealthy arrangement, and on the death of a patriarch in the year 1551 they passed by his nephew and elevated to the vacant post a more popular candidate, Sind (or Sulaka). Now it was held to be requisite that three metropolitans should take part in the appointment of a patriarch. But there were not three to be found siding with the schism. The difficulty was got over by an appeal to Rome, and the Chaldæan catholicos was consecrated by Pope Julius III. At the same time a priest named Moses brought the Peshitta to Europe, and thus prepared for the study of Syrian Christianity by Western scholars.

[1] Etheridge says that the Chaldæans came from both sections of Eastern Syrian Christians—the Nestorians and the Jacobites, and claims in support of this view the authority of Smith and Dwight, "Researches in Armenia," in Grant's *Nestorians or Lost Tribes*, p. 170. But according to Badger they are simply a branch of the Nestorians.

It is not to be supposed, however, that the mere question of arranging a consecration was the only motive for so important a step as this union. With some we may see in it the outcome of the repeated efforts of the Latin Church to absorb the Nestorians. The connection once established was continued, and the successors of Sind also obtained their consecration from Rome. Thus the Chaldæans are the Nestorians who have submitted to the papacy, and we may regard them as the fruits of the Jesuit missions in Syria. They are called by the Syrian Christians who have successfully resisted the papal aggression, the *Maghlobeen*, that is, "the Conquered." The Chaldæans are now chiefly found in rural districts east of the Tigris, and they are comparatively numerous at Elkoösh, where they have a large monastery bearing the name of Rabban Hormuz; they have a catholicos at Bagdad.

Abortive attempts at union with Rome have been made from time to time in other quarters. Thus Elias II., bishop of Mosul, sent two deputations to Pope Paul IV., the first in the year 1607 and the second three years later. In a letter which accompanied his messengers he expressed a desire for a reconciliation between the Nestorians and the Latin Church. Again, in the year 1657, another approach from the Nestorian side was attempted, when Elias III. addressed a letter to the congregation *De Propaganda Fide*, expressing his readiness to join the Church of Rome on two conditions —(1) that the pope would allow the Nestorians to have a church of their own in the city of Rome; (2) that they should not be required to alter their doctrine or discipline. *Sancta simplicitas!* Nothing could come of that. Subsequently the Nestorian bishops of Ormus, who all bore the name of Simeon, more than once proposed plans of reconciliation with Rome, and one of them sent a confession of faith to the pontiff to demonstrate their orthodoxy. But it all came to nothing. The main body of the Nestorians has remained in neglected isolation and poverty. Meanwhile the Roman Catholic propaganda never ceases its efforts to gather these far-off wandering sheep into its

fold.[1] In the eighteenth century it won over a small body of Nestorians at Diabeker. But for the most part these attempts have been fruitless.

The Jacobites.

The Jacobites are the representatives of Monophysitism in the Syrian Church, and therefore they are at the antipodes of the Nestorians in regard to divergence from the Greek Church. They are named after Jacob surnamed Al Bardai, either from Bardaa, a city in Armenia, or, as is generally assumed, from a sort of felt which the Arabs call "barda," used for saddle-cloths, which he wore in a ragged condition, so that he went about, it was said, looking like a beggar. Born at Tela, a place also called Constantina, fifty-five miles east of Edessa, towards the close of the fifth century, he was brought up in a monastery, where he was educated in Monophysite theology and Greek and Syriac literature, and disciplined with severe asceticism, and whence his fame as a monk miracle-worker rapidly spread. When it reached the Empress Theodora she summoned him to Constantinople, reckoning him to be a valuable asset for the cause that she was intriguing to help forward. He came reluctantly, having no ambition for the honours that the empress heaped upon him. Detesting the luxury and worldly glamour of the court, he retired to a monastery near the city, where he remained for fifteen years, living the life of a complete recluse. But his work was yet before him. In spite of his long-practised habit of retirement, he was destined to a career of great activity. His call came from the desperate needs of his party. The weak Justinian, who had wavered for some time under the influence of his masterful consort, was brought at length to take vigorous measures for the enforcement of the Chalcedonian decrees. Bishops and inferior clergy who refused to accept them were re-

[1] A Nestorian priest at Amadieh deplored to the American missionary, Dr. Grant, that his own father had been bastinadoed in order to compel him to become a Roman Catholic. See Etheridge, pp. 127, 128.

moved from their posts and punished with exile and imprisonment. The consequence was that over a very wide area where the Monophysite doctrine prevailed, the people were deprived of any ministry according to their own views, and therefore left, as Gibbon sneeringly remarks, to the choice of being "famished or poisoned." Then Harith the Magnificent, a sheikh of the Christian Arabs, brought the case of these unhappy people before their patroness Theodora, and so induced her to drag Jacob out of his cell and persuade him to return to Eastern Syria for the help of his fellow-religionists.

Jacob was now launched on a perilous and exacting undertaking; for his mission was to be followed out in defiance of the emperor's orders, and it demanded immense energy as well as heroic courage. The brave man rose to the occasion. He changed his manner of life. From being a shrinking recluse and letting the years glide by unmarked in the even course of the monastic life, he suddenly plunged into a sea of affairs, and undertook long journeys sometimes on foot, at other times on a fleet dromedary lent him by the sheikh. He traversed Asia Minor, Syria, and Mesopotamia, as far as Persia. Wherever he went he ordained bishops and priests, exhorted the people to fidelity to their creed, and encouraged them amid persecutions and disappointments. His enthusiasm was infectious, and his indefatigable labours were rewarded with brilliant success. Jacob was credited with having ordained a fabulous number of clergy.[1] Thus the fire which Justinian thought he had stamped out had burst into flame again. The orthodox bishops were enraged. The emperor was indignant. He would have seized the obnoxious disturber of his happy settlement if only he could have done so. Orders were issued for the arrest of Jacob; rewards were offered to any who could catch him. It was all in vain. Jacob seemed to be ubiquitous. He had friends among the Arabs who hid him whenever danger

[1] According to John of Asia 100,000, including eighty-nine bishops and two patriarchs. See Laud, *Anecdot. Syr.* ii. 251.

threatened. So, while many an obscure Monophysite bishop was languishing in a dungeon, this chief offender not only remained at large, but continued his labours among the people in promoting the cause to which he was devoted, at the risk of his liberty, perhaps his life.

This is the bright page of the story. The sequel is very disappointing. Like many another enthusiast, Jacob failed in administration. His very simplicity, preserved for so many years in the seclusion of his cell, unfitted him for dealing with designing men. Unhappily there were some of this kind about him who played the unsuspecting saint for their own purposes, and all unconsciously he became a tool in their hands. The consequence was that the Monophysite party was split into miserable factions, which sometimes came to blows and even murder. The most important and wide-reaching of these disturbances was occasioned by the conduct of Paul, whom Jacob had ordained "Patriarch of Antioch." During the persecution Paul and three other leading bishops of his party were summoned to Constantinople, where they were harshly treated, till one after another all yielded to the combined pressure of government authority and popular disfavour. It was purely an act of weakness, and Paul immediately shrank away into retirement, taking refuge in Arabia with Moudir, Harith's successor. As soon as Jacob heard of the defection of the patriarch whom he had himself nominated, he indignantly excommunicated the unhappy man. But Paul was heartily ashamed of his conduct, and after three years Jacob acknowledged his penitence and consented to receive him into communion again after a synod of Monophysites had sanctioned this proposal. That, however, did not end the trouble. It only transferred it to the Monophysites at Alexandria, who appear to have had other and earlier grounds of complaint against the culprit, previously well known in their city. Peter the Monophysite patriarch pronounced his deposition—a distinct breach of canon law, for Alexandria had no jurisdiction over Antioch; the two

patriarchs were of equal rank and mutually independent. Jacob went to Alexandria to endeavour to settle the matter. But he was not the man for delicate negotiations. The party of Peter won him over to signing his assent to the deposition of Paul, though not to the excommunication of him. The result was a schism beginning in the year 576, which, as John of Asia says, "spread like an ulcer."[1] The misfortune was that both parties were Monophysite, both therefore under the ban of the Chalcedonian party and the imperial government. All other attempts at a settlement having failed, Jacob set out a second time for Alexandria in the vain hope of making terms of peace. He was now an old man, wearied and vexed with the constant strife in the midst of which his lot was cast, so utterly against his will and nature, since he would have infinitely preferred the quiet seclusion of his cell from which he had been dragged against his will. He never reached his destination. His party was stricken with a serious illness at the monastery of Cassianus on the borders of Egypt, and Jacob and three members of the company died there (July A.D. 578). Of course there were rumours of foul play. But no evidence was brought forward to confirm them. It was perhaps a happy ending to a life which at its zenith had shone with brilliant success, but the later half of which had been overcast with gloom and failure. Jacob was a good, unambitious man, an enthusiastic evangelist, an indefatigable peace-maker; but the larger half of the Church denounced his evangel, and his old friends whom he desired to reconcile would not have his peace.

Meanwhile the persecution of the Syrian Monophysites, like that of the Nestorians at an earlier date, was driving them into the hands of the Persians. Then divisions of a doctrinal character appeared among them. There were the Niobites, led by Niobes, a teacher who maintained the perfect unity of Christ as distinguished from the more moderate Monophysites, among whom some distinction between the Divinity and the humanity was allowed.

[1] John of Asia (trans. by Payne Smith), p. 282.

Then there were the Tritheites, who appeared in the reign of Justin II. under the leadership of John Askunages ("Bottle-shoes") who, according to Bar Hebræus stated his views thus: "I confess one nature of Christ, the Incarnate Word; but in the Trinity I reckon the natures and substances and godheads according to the number of the persons." There was a clearness and logical consistency in the views of these people not attained by less daring thinkers. If the humanity of Christ is so absorbed and transmuted as to be entirely lost in His Divinity, either you must have a Patripassion or at least a Sabellian Monarchianism, or you must find His distinctive individuality in His Divine nature. In the latter case, if as God He is a distinct individual by the side of the Father, you have two Gods, and as the same is said of the Holy Ghost, the consequence is Tritheism. Later there appeared people known as Tetratheists, in consequence of the teaching of Damianus, a Syrian, the Severian or Monophysite patriarch of Alexandria—Peter's successor—at the end of the sixth century. He recognised first the essential personality of the one substance, God in Himself, and then a separate individuality for each of the Three Persons of the Trinity. His opponent, Peter of Calinicus, would make him push his argument further, and so come to have a separate divinity for each property of God, a perfect pantheon, if he would be consistent with his root principle. But John of Asia describes him as an untrustworthy and inconsistent man.[1] Other divisions of the Monophysites are more closely associated with Alexandria and the Coptic Church than with the Syrian. But they have lingered on in Syria down to the present day. The Jacobites are now mostly found in Mesopotamia, especially at Mosul and Mardeen. There are scarcely any left in Palestine and few in Damascus. But they have a monastery at Jerusalem, and some of them are to be found at Hamah and Aleppo. Etheridge calculates that apart from the colony at Malabar the total number of Jacobites is now probably not more

[1] John of Asia, p. 306.

than 150,000.[1] They claim to be descended from the original Hebrew Christians and designate themselves "B'né Israel." In their church government they are very hierarchical, although their orders are under suspicion since they are derived from Jacob Al Bardai, whose own ordination to the episcopate has been questioned, for some have maintained that he was only ordained as a presbyter.

In conclusion it is to be observed that the Syrian Church has made no inconsiderable contributions to literature, although Renan's generalised verdict of mediocrity must be applied to the mass of it. First we have the Peshitta, the standard Syriac Bible, the Vulgate of the East. Then there are several versions and successive revisions made by Jacobite scholars in the interest of the Monophysite doctrine. The first of these was produced by Aksenaya, or Philoxenus, bishop of Mabbogh, with the assistance of his chorepiscopus Polycarp, which appeared in the year 508, and became popular among the Jacobites; it was superseded by later revisions, especially that of Thomas of Heraclea, bishop of the same city of Mabbogh early in the seventh century. A hundred years later a final attempt at revision of the Old Testament was made by Jacob of Edessa, but his work does not seem to have met with acceptance, and he did not proceed to revise the New Testament. The Melchite or Greek Church of Palestine had its own revision in the local Aramaic dialect, a dialect corresponding to the Jewish Targums, and probably more nearly approaching that spoken by our Lord than that of any other version. Meanwhile the Nestorians held to the old Peshitta, and opposed stolid indifference to the only attempt ever made to give them a more accurate version, when Mar Abha I., a catholicos in the middle of the sixth century, having studied Greek under a teacher at Edessa named Thomas, with his assistance made a new translation into Syriac of all the Old Testament and perhaps also the New.

The story of Syriac literature properly begins with

[1] *Syrian Churches*, p. 149, note.

Tatian's Diatessaron. Next comes the scholar Bardaisan, whom the Church failed to retain and who has been called "the last of the Gnostics." While his authorship of the important work *De Fato*, already briefly described,[1] is doubtful, he is stated to have written a *History of Armenia* and a book called *Hypomnemata Indica*, compiled out of information he obtained from Indian ambassadors on their way through Edessa to the Roman court. Jacob of Nisibis is a famous Syrian writer of the fourth century; but the Homilies once ascribed to him are now said to have been written by Aphraates, who was followed towards the end of the century by Ephraim,[2] and the poets Balai or Balæus, who has given his name to the pentasyllabic metre, and Cyrillona, who composed a poem "on the locusts, and on Divine chastisements, and on the Huns." The present form of the famous "Doctrine of Addai"—the work in which the legend of Abgar is enshrined, and where we have the narrative of the early evangelising of Edessa and the first bishops and martyrs—cannot be earlier than the fourth century. Only fragments of the works of Rabbulas have been found. Previous to elevation to the episcopate, his successor Ibas had been one of the translators of Theodore's works. The Monophysites claimed Simeon the Stylite as sharing their views, and an eighth century manuscript contains a letter ascribed to him and addressed to the Emperor Leo, and another manuscript of the same period contains three letters credited with the same authorship; all of which documents, if genuine, go to show that he did not accept the decision of Chalcedon. At the end of the fifth century we come upon Jacob of Serugh, who was described as "the flute of the Holy Spirit and the harp of the believing Church." He left a mass of poems. According to the historian Bar Hebræus, he had seventy amanuenses to copy out his 760 metrical homilies, as well as his commentaries and letters, odes and hymns. The most famous Syrian writer of the sixth century is John of Asia, whose *Ecclesiastical History* is

[1] See p. 466. [2] See p. 473.

our chief source of information for the period covered by the third part of it—which is all we possess in a complete form. John was a missionary among the heathen of Asia, Lydia, Caria, and Phrygia, and he was remarkably successful in winning converts from paganism to Christianity. Yet he was a Monophysite. From these facts we may draw two instructive inferences. First, if there was something peculiarly stimulating to missionary enthusiasm and promising for its fruitfulness in Nestorianism—as we saw may have been the case,[1]—its extreme opposite was not excluded from the evangelistic mission. Second, while both Nestorianism on the one hand and Monophysitism on the other were anathematised by the orthodox Church, and the leading supporters of both heresies excommunicated, the mighty spirit of the gospel, which is larger than all sects and creeds, was working through them for the extension of the kingdom of God. If we may apply to these two bodies the great test "by their fruits ye shall know them," we shall come to the delightful conclusion that "the root of the matter" was in both of them, although the good men who led the dominant Church were unhappily not enlightened or liberal enough to perceive it. When John returned from his missionary activities, which had been honoured so highly in their success, he was made Monophysite bishop of Ephesus. He suffered imprisonment during the persecution under Justin in the year 571. There will be a peculiar interest in reading his narrative when we consider his statement that "most of these histories were written at the very time when the persecutions were going on." . . . He says, "it was even necessary that friends should remove the leaves on which these chapters are inscribed, and every other particle of writing, and conceal them in various places, where they sometimes remained for two or three years."[2] Passing over a number of obscure writers, we come to Jacob of Edessa, the most famous Monophysite writer at the end of the seventh century. Dr. Wright says, "In the literature of his country

[1] See p. 480. [2] *Hist. Eccl.* (trans. by Payne Smith), p. 163.

Jacob holds much the same place as Jerome among the Latin Fathers. He was, for his time, a man of great culture and wide reading, being familiar with Greek and with older Syriac writers."[1] His writings comprise commentaries, liturgical compositions, history, philosophy, grammar. Unfortunately Jacob's chronicle, which would have been of great value as a continuation of Eusebius down to his own time, has been lost. In his Syriac grammar he used a device he had invented, consisting of vowel signs to be written on a line with and between the consonants, after the European pattern of writing.

Thus far Syrian literature has chiefly flourished among the Jacobites. The seventh and eighth century saw more Nestorian writers — Babhai the elder, a prolific writer credited with the authorship of eighty-three or eighty-four works, including a commentary on the whole Bible; Isho-yabh of Gedhala, author of commentaries, histories, and homilies; Sahdona, who wrote two volumes on the monastic life; and many others, among the most famous of whom was Abraham the Lame, who wrote a book of exhortations, discourses on repentance, etc. In the ninth century the products of Syrian literature are more scarce, though some of them are historically important. One of the most valuable was Dionysius of Tell Mahre's great work, his *Annals*, while Thomas of Marga, whose acquaintance we have already made,[2] belongs to this period. The eleventh century is meagrely represented by Syrian literature; but in the twelfth we reach the famous Jacobite writer, Dionysius Bar Salibi, created bishop of Mar'ash in 1145. He left commentaries on the Old and New Testaments, giving a material or literal, and a spiritual or mystical explanation of each book; a compendium of theology; and many other works. In the next century we come to the learned historian Bar Hebræus, who was born in the year 1226. During his youth he had studied Greek, Arabic, rhetoric, and medicine. In 1253 he became bishop of Aleppo; he died in the year 1286. His *Ecclesiastical*

[1] *Hist. Syr. Literature*, p. 143.

[2] See p. 484.

Chronicle, written in the simple style of a man of culture, which contrasts pleasantly with the swollen verbosity of so many Oriental writers of the later period, is a valuable source of information for the historical writer in the present day. Bar Hebræus was a Jacobite. The most prominent Nestorian writer of the same period is Abdh-isho bar Berikha, who died in the year 1318. His chief work is a theological treatise called *Marganitha* (*i.e.* "The Pearl"), written in the year 1298. The author himself translated it into Arabic. Mai has edited it with a Latin translation, and Badger has given an English translation in his work on the Nestorians.[1] Abdh-isho produced a number of other works, among which is his *Paradise of Eden*, a collection of fifty theological poems.

[1] *The Nestorians*, ii. p. 380 ff.

CHAPTER IV

THE NESTORIANS OF THE FAR EAST

Asseman, *Biblioth. Orient.* tome iv.; Geddes, *History of the Church of Malabar*, 1694; Hough, *History of Christianity in India*, vol. i., 1839; Rae, *The Syrian Church in India*, 1892.

THE remarkable enterprise of the Syrian missions promoted by the impulse of the Nestorian movement is registered in the scattering of metropolitan sees over a vast area of Central and Eastern Asia. Impelled by two forces, the persecution of the orthodox Church in combination with the Byzantine Empire which drove them into exile, and the zeal for spreading the gospel which converted their banishment into a benediction, the Nestorians went much further than was necessary merely to secure immunity from molestation; and wherever they went they planted the standard of the cross. So we find metropolitan bishoprics in Syria, Armenia, and Arabia; at Elam, Nisibis, Bethgerma, and Carach in Persia; at Halavan or Halach on the confines of Media; at Mara in Korassan; at Hara in Camboya; at Raja and Tarbistan on the Caspian; at Dailen, Samarcand, and Mavaralnabar; at Tauket or Taugut—a country of Great Tartary; in Casgar, in Turkistan, in India, in China. From many of these centres all traces of ancient Christianity have long since disappeared, swept away in the deluge of Mongolian invasions, stamped out by Mohammedan tyranny, or, if spared for a time, generally only left to perish in crass ignorance and spiritual inanition. But in some few places it still lives on among numerous adherents.

The most important of the old Syrian churches existing in our own day is the community of ancient Christians

consisting of 400,000 people inhabiting the mountain slopes and valleys and coast of Malabar, the most enlightened of whom live at Travancore. Local tradition assigns the origin of this Indian Church to St. Thomas the Apostle, who is said to have "landed at Malankara, an island in the lagoon near Crangamore, preached to the natives and baptised many converts."[1] According to the legends of the land, he planted seven churches and ordained two priests in this district, converted the king and all the people of Mailapore, went on to China and was there equally successful, and returned to Mailapore, where he roused the jealousy of the Brahmins, who excited the people to stone him, after which one of them pierced him with a lance. When these parts were discovered to Europe by Portuguese adventurers in the year 1517, among other ruins and relics the remains of a chapel were seen, digging beneath which the travellers found some bones, which they identified as undoubtedly the relics of the apostle on account of their superior whiteness.

Turning from local legend, the late origin of which must be admitted since we have no traces of its antiquity, and it can be accounted for apart from tradition, as we shall see in proceeding with the story, when we come to the literary records. Here we have the earliest account of St. Thomas's mission to India in the *Acts of Judas Thomas*, previously referred to,[2] which belongs to the third, or even the fourth century, written by a man named Leucius, the author of several apocryphal "Acts." This work tells us that in the division of districts among the apostles India fell to the lot of Thomas. He was unwilling to go so far on so hazardous a mission. Then Christ appeared to him in a vision, encouraging him with a promise to be with him. Thomas remaining obstinate and even growing angry, Christ sold him to an Indian merchant as a slave carpenter. Arriving in India after fantastic scenes by the way, Thomas was introduced to the King Gundaphorus. When this king learnt what his trade was, he gave him money with which

[1] Rae, *The Syrian Church in India*, p. 15. [2] P. 474.

to build a palace. Several times the apostle sent for more money, describing to the king the progress of his work from walls to roof; but he was spending all the money he got on widows and orphans and other needy folk. So when Gundaphorus came to take possession of his palace no palace was to be seen. Thomas's friends told him of the Apostle's charities and of the ascetic living of the holy man. "The king having heard this, stroked his face with his hands, shaking his head for a long time." He was about to kill both Thomas and the merchant, flaying and burning them, when his brother died and went to heaven, where he saw a palace, which he was told by the angels Thomas had built for the king. Coming back to life while his body was being put in the burial robe, the prince informed the astonished monarch of what he had learnt in the world above. The result was the conversion of king and people. After the fourth century the connection of Thomas with India was widely accepted both in the Eastern and in the Western Churches.[1]

We have here a double confusion, first in the person of the missionary and then in the country. There are two Thomases and several Indias. Centuries later, a Nestorian missionary named Thomas went to India, and his mission has been transferred to the credit of the apostle; then the word "India" was used in early times very vaguely for the countries about the south of the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf—Abyssinia, Southern Arabia, perhaps also Southern Persia.[2] The orthodox tradition of the life of Thomas assigns Parthia as his district.[3] According to

[1] *e.g.* Jerome, *Epis.* 70.

[2] Harnack holds that the reference in the *Acts of Thomas* is to "the North-West Territory of our modern India" (*Expansion of Christianity*, vol. ii. p. 299).

[3] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* iii. 1; cf. *Clementine Recognitions*, ix. 29, and Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* i. 19. According to Rufinus, *Hist. Eccl.* ii. 5, and Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* iv. 8, he was buried at Edessa. The Roman Martyrology reconciles the two stories in a measure by bringing the apostle's bones from India to Edessa, whence they are conveyed by Crusaders to Ortona in Italy. According to Clement of Alexandria, he died a natural death, *Strom.* iv. 9, 73. See Hastings' *Dict. Bible*, article "Thomas."

Eusebius, another apostle, Bartholomew, had preached to the Indians.[1] But it seems not unlikely that the historian was misled by the name of the Sindians in the region of the Bosphorus, over whom kings of the house of Ptolemy ruled, because Bartholomew's traditional field of labour was the district of the Bosphorus.

We have more definite information about Pantænus, the head of the theological school at Alexandria, who gave up his pleasant work in that centre of culture and luxury to go as a missionary to "India."[2] Eusebius identifies this "India" with the scene of Bartholomew's activity. That, however, is most improbable, if the locality assigned to the apostle is correct. Since there can be no doubt that the name is "India" in this case, there is here no possibility of confusion with the Sindians. But the question is what "India"? Eusebius tells us that Pantænus found a copy of the *Gospel according to the Hebrews*, which he calls "the Gospel according to Matthew," written "in the Hebrew language." Therefore there must have been Christians in the place before him, and in all probability these were Jewish Christians. The Jews travelled far in their trading journeys, and it is quite possible that this distant Christian movement was in the country we now know as India. On the other hand, we have no definite trace of Christianity there before the arrival of the Nestorians. It is therefore more probable Pantænus's "India" was one of those parts nearer to Egypt to which the name was sometimes given.

It is also conceivable that natives of India learnt about Christianity through their own visits to Alexandria, and carried the gospel back to their country on their return home. Among the many nationalities represented in that cosmopolitan centre of trade much earlier than this were people who bore the name "Indian." Dion Cassius, whose date is about A.D. 100, writes of Ethiopians, Arabians, Bactrians, Scythians, Persians, and Indians flocking to

[1] *Hist. Eccl.* v. 10.

[2] *Ibid.*; also Jerome, *De vir. ill.* 36.

Alexandria.[1] The order in which these names stand suggests that the Indians who come last were from the most remotely eastern of all the nationalities mentioned, and since they follow the Persians we should infer that their country was farther off than Persia. If we could be sure of Jerome's information and accuracy, we should have a clear proof that India proper was the country to which Pantænus went, for he says in his letter to Magnus, an orator at Rome, "Pantænus, a philosopher of the Stoic school,"—he had been a Stoic previous to his conversion to Christianity,—"was on account of his great reputation for learning sent by Demetrius, bishop of Alexandria, to India to preach Christ to the *Brahmins* and philosophers there."[2] It would be very interesting to think that a man who had passed from Greek philosophy to Christianity had been selected as a missionary to the Indian Brahmins and had actually attempted the conversion of the caste which our missionaries find almost unapproachable, though apparently without satisfactory results, or he would hardly have abandoned the work to resume his chair at the Alexandrian theological school. But unfortunately Jerome is notoriously inaccurate, being often proved guilty of rushing at conclusions on insufficient evidence, and filling in the lacunæ of information with the creations of imagination, though no doubt these are shaped with regard to certain degrees of verisimilitude. We must not attach much weight to his assertions when they go beyond Eusebius and other earlier writers. It would be enough that Jerome knew that Pantænus had been sent to some place called "India," for him to conclude as a matter of course that the Stoic had gone to evangelise the Brahmins. His assertion may be taken, however, as valuable to a certain extent. It shows that early in the fifth century it was believable to a scholarly man with large knowledge of the world, that India itself might have been visited by a Christian missionary before the end of the second century. Therefore in Jerome's

[1] Smith, *Dict. Christ. Biog.* vol. iv. p. 182[a], note *a*.

[2] *Epist.* lxx.

day at latest our India was known and not inaccessible. This is probable on other grounds. Moreover, Indian influences are to be traced in Alexandrian philosophy and in Christian Gnosticism. There is no insuperable difficulty in believing that the gospel may have reached the country before the end of the second century. Still, even if we could settle this question in the affirmative, the answer would not be of much value. We can see no signs of any results of the early mission; even if this did exist it would appear to have been abortive. Pantænus's return and resumption of his old work, as already indicated, point to an unsatisfactory ending to the ambitious project. A mission projected in this spasmodic way is not likely to be successful. It is heroic to attack the most impregnable fortress if the attempt is adequate to the aim; otherwise it is Quixotic.

Over against Jerome's authority in favour of India proper—so unreliable in itself—we have not only to set the loose way in which the name was commonly used, but also the absence of all real evidence in the land itself previous to the Nestorian period. The local tradition goes back to St. Thomas, passing over Pantænus in silence. That may be explicable on the ground that the passion for an apostolic foundation was common in the churches, while the visit of an unsuccessful missionary might be mercifully forgotten. Still, we have no evidence to point to the existence of any Christian Church in India at this early period, and that is the real question with which we are concerned, whatever may have been the objective of the Alexandrian scholar's expedition. Even Dion Chrysostom's Indians may have been the people just to the east of Persia, in the country since known as Beluchistan—very far from the Indian Christians discovered in later times, whose home is in the south; if Pantænus did go to that country, north of the Arabian Sea, he would have had nothing to do with the founding of the Church in Travancore.

Among the signatories at the Nicene Council we have

the name of "John of Persia in all Persia and great India." The vastness of the area here assigned to John is such that he could not have exercised supervision over it, and we must take the vague phrase to mean that whatever Christians there were in these parts of the East were supposed to be under his authority. This does not carry the assertion that there were Christians at the time in India, much less that it was our India, although the word "great," which does not seem to have had a definite geographical meaning when applied to India, suggests an indefinitely large region.

Towards the end of the fourth century we have the remarkable story of Frumentius recorded by Rufinus, who associates it with "India";[1] but there is no doubt that he means Abyssinia. To this therefore we must return later on, meanwhile dismissing it as having no connection with Indian Christianity.

About the same time we come to "Theophilus the Indian." According to Philostorgius, he was an Arian who went to India to spread the doctrine of his party there. But the Arian historian obliges us by adding "that these Indians are now called Homeritæ, instead of their old name of Sabæans, which they received from the city of Saba, the chief city of the whole nation."[2] A little further on he says that "Constantius sent ambassadors to those who were formerly called Sabæans, but are now known as Homeritæ, a tribe which is descended from Abraham by Keturah." He adds that the territory which they inhabit is called by the Greeks "Arabia Magna" and "Arabia Felix."[3] He identifies Saba with the Sheba whose queen came to see Solomon. Here then we have the clearest possible evidence that the name "India" was used for South Arabia. However, while this plainly shows that Theophilus had nothing to do with our India, his story is not devoid of interest on its own account.

Thus, when we examine the various successive references

[1] *Eccl. Hist.* ii. 9–14. [2] Philostorgius, *Hist. Eccl.* ii. 6.
[3] *Ibid.* iii. 4.

to early Christian associations with India, they all melt into vagueness, or indicate some other region than that of the present Christians of St. Thomas. We have here six persons who are apparently carrying on Christian work in India, and yet to none of them can we assign our present India as the scene of their labours. Thomas, Bartholomew, Pantænus, John of the large episcopate, Frumentius, Theophilus—all of these men, when their Indian claims are examined, seem to be associated with other regions. South Arabia, Abyssinia, the neighbourhood of the Bosphorus, the country immediately east of Persia, all these parts have borne the name or have been mistaken for India, and it is among them that the work of the early missionaries is distributed. Of course it cannot be denied that Christianity may have reached India proper, or at all events the South India of the later Church, at an earlier time than we know. That is another matter. We have no evidence to indicate that it was so, and all our available evidence points in other directions. There we must leave the question.

We come out of these mists of legend into clear daylight in the Nestorian period. There is no doubt that the great wave of missionary enthusiasm that swept over so large a part of Central Asia poured down into Southern India, or, more probably, came direct across the sea to the region of Travancore, then passed over to Ceylon, and ultimately reached China. The ancient Christian community in India is known as the "Syrian Church" of India. This name should not lead us to suppose that it is composed of Syrian colonists. Its members consist of the native people of their province. But the name reminds us that their Christianity sprang from the activity of the Syrian Church in these parts. The consequences of its origin are seen in many customs, notably in the use of the Syrian liturgies. Its theology is Nestorian, after the pattern of Syrian Nestorianism.

The earliest distinct witness to the existence of the Syrian Christian in India is afforded by the Alexandrian

merchant Cosmas, who was surnamed Indicopleustes on account of the fame of his voyage in the Indian seas early in the sixth century. He wrote a curious book, full of strange fancies, entitled *Universal Christian Topography.* In this work Cosmas states that he found a church with clergy and a congregation in Ceylon, and also Christians "in the land called Malabar, where the pepper grows." At Caliana—the coast country south of Bombay—there was a bishop who held his appointment from Persia. Returning to Ceylon, Cosmas adds, "The island hath also a church of Persian Christians who have settled there from Persia, and a deacon, and all the apparatus of public worship."[1] If this is correct, we must regard the Malabar Church as in the first place consisting of refugees from persecution in Persia, like the Huguenots in England and the Pilgrim Fathers in America. But the Ceylon refugees never appear to have associated with the natives, and consequently their Church melted away and in course of time disappeared. Cosmas was himself a Nestorian and a friend of the catholicos in Persia. He would therefore look on the co-religionists whom he had discovered to his surprise in these remote parts with peculiar interest. The Persian navigators who came into communication with the Malabar coast travelled further and carried the gospel to the Coromandel coast, and so were brought into contact with the great empire of the Pallavas.

While satisfactory documentary evidence of the origin of Christianity in these parts is lacking, this is partly made up for by the irrefragable testimony of monuments. In the year 1547 a cross with an inscription in Pahlavi, the language of the Persian Empire at the time of the Sassanian dynasty, was found on the hill now known as St. Thomas's Mount at Mailapore, the chief town of this district. The date assigned to it is the seventh or at latest the eighth century. There is a similar cross with the same inscription in a church at Cottayam in North

[1] Quoted in Rae's *The Syrian Church in India*, p. 115.

Travancore. A translation of the inscription is as follows:—

"In punishment by the cross (was) the suffering of this One;
He who is the true Christ, and God alone, and Guide ever pure."[1]

This inscription is doubly important. In the first place, the use of the Pahlavi language in which it is composed is an unmistakable testimony to the antiquity of Christianity in the places where the crosses are set up, helping us to fix an approximate date for them. In the second place, the singular wording of the inscription contains an apparent statement of Nestorian doctrine. The second line seems to refer to the Trinity. The order in which the Three Persons occur is not so very surprising when we consider that it is the order of St. Paul's doxology. But the couplet appears to identify all Three Persons of the Trinity as present in the Incarnation and as therefore present also at the crucifixion. The same idea is found in later Nestorian documents; it was expressly condemned in the synod of Diamper (A.D. 1599). The doctrine thus expressed comes very near to Patripassianism; but then it must be remembered that, as held by Nestorians, who made a sharp distinction between the two natures in Christ, it did not involve the suffering of the Divine Persons in the way in which the union of the natures would imply. It was the human nature that was tortured on the cross and that died. With this view it was possible to think of the Divine nature in Christ as consisting of the whole Godhead, and yet not be Patripassian.

There is a second cross in the old church at Cottayam—with a modification of the curious inscription—making three of these crosses in all; but this is assigned to the tenth century. A panel in the same slab of stone, similar in shape and decoration to that

[1] *The Indian Antiquary*, vol. iii., 1874, pp. 308–316, article by A. C. Burnell, Ph.D., of the Madras Civil Service, on "Some Pahlavi Inscriptions in South India," quoted by Rae in notes to chapter ix. p. 370. But there is some doubt as to the correctness of this translation.

containing the cross, has on each side of it the figure of a peacock. Here we first meet with the mysterious symbol associated with St. Thomas in the later times of the Syrian Church in India. Various fantastic legends given by successive travellers—by Marco Polo, by John de Marignolli, and lastly by Duarte Barbosa as late as the sixteenth century—bring peacocks in some way into the story of the apostle. Evidently the symbolism has been borrowed from the mythology of the neighbouring Hindu temple, the Purana of which tells how Siva's wife appeared to her lord in the form of a peafowl, the name of which in Sanscrit is *mayil*. This is given as an explanation of the name Mailapore, *Mayil-a-pur*—"Peacock-town."

While this church at Mailapore declined and died out, the church at Malabar continued to flourish, assimilating the native population, and obtaining political status and recognised rights of self-government. These are registered in two copperplate charters, one of the date A.D. 774, recording a grant by King Vira Raghava Chakravarti to Irair Corthan of Crangamore as the representative of the Christian community, making him sovereign merchant of Kerala; the other granted to the Syrians of St. Thomas, about the year 824, with the sanction of King Sthanu's palace-major, confirming a gift of land to Muruvan Sapor Iso and the Tarasa Church. Further intercommunication between State and Church and confirmation of the Church's rights followed. In the year 745, according to the local tradition, Knaye Thomas, or Thomas of Cana, came with a fresh band of emigrants from Bagdad, Nineveh, and Jerusalem. Some have attributed the name "Christians of St. Thomas" to a confusion of this leader of the more recent additions to the Church with the Apostle Thomas. These new-comers appear to have settled to the south of the original Syrian community. The Christian Church in India is thus divided into two portions, a northern and a southern. The latter consists of people of fairer complexion than their brethren to the north. Yet another body of refugees appeared in the year 822 led by two

Nestorian Persians, Mar Sapor and Mar Perog, the former of whom has been identified with the Sapor to whom the grant of land was made as recorded in the copperplate. The Syrian Christians were now important people in Malabar, both socially and politically. But before long their Church declined in missionary fervour and religious vitality. It has never developed any intellectual energy or made any contribution to theology.

When Cheraman Perumal, the last emperor of Kerala, became a Mohammedan and died while on a visit to Arabia, the country came under Mussulman rule. We now reach an almost blank period of five hundred years in the history of the Syrian Church in India, during which, however, the Christians were so powerful that at one time they had their own kings. Subsequently they came under the government of Cochin. By this time the Church had become spiritually torpid. The ceremonies were duly performed. As far as we can see, they were the chief functions of religion. Meanwhile the Christians lived as a superior close caste, so completely had their old missionary zeal died out. They even came to imitate the Hindoos in caste regulations of diet and avoidance of pollution.

The next period in the history of Christianity in India is that of the Roman Catholic missions which resulted from the great religious revival in the Western Church during the thirteenth century, and were carried on by those wonderful democratic missionary bodies, the Franciscans and the Dominicans. During the years 1321 to 1323, Jordanus, a Frenchman of the Dominican order, the author of the *Mirabilia*, was in Malabar. Thence he wrote a circular letter to his brethren of the two orders of Friars, commending India as a sphere for missionary activity. Nothing is more interesting in this story than the combination abroad of the orders the members of which were rivals at home. Jordanus the Dominican was accompanied by four Franciscans when he embarked for Quilon. A storm drove them on the island of Salsette, near Tana, where they were kindly received by the Nestorian Christians. Describing

his experiences in his second letter, Jordanus says that while he was away from his four companions in this place, on a journey to Baroch, they were arrested and killed by the Saracens. This is very significant. For the time being, the Nestorians are living in the same place in peace and safety, because they keep themselves to themselves. But these Franks, these new-comers who are busy in trying to make converts, cannot be endured. So the missionaries are killed, while the Church is not molested. Can we have a plainer proof of the mournful fact that this Church had entirely lost the evangelistic zeal that had been the glory of her founders?

In his *Mirabilia* Jordanus describes his mission as being very successful in spite of trying persecutions and perilous adventures. His story reads like St. Paul's chapter of autobiography in the Second Epistle to the Corinthians. Four times he was cast into prison by the Saracens; how many times he had his hair plucked out, was scourged, was stoned, "God Himself knoweth," he writes. In the year 1330, Pope John XXII. issued a bull to the Christians of Quilon, nominating Jordanus bishop of that place, and inviting the Nestorians to enter "the Christian Church." No doubt this earnest, active man left some lasting fruits of his heroic work. John de Marignolli found a "Church of St. George" of the Latin communion in the year 1347. But the greatest activity of the Latin Church in India did not begin till a century later. This was of a very different spirit from Jordanus's Christ-like missionary enterprise. It was a Jesuit mission armed with the cruel weapons of the Inquisition.

CHAPTER V

LATER EASTERN CHRISTIANITY

Marco Polo (trans. by Yule, 2nd edit.); Asseman, tome iv.; Mosheim, *Ecclesiastical History*, vols. ii. and v.; Coleridge, *Life and Letters of St. Francis Xavier*, 1902; Rae, *Syrian Churches in India*, 1892; Brinkley, *China* ("Oriental Series," 1902); Broomhall, *The Chinese Empire*, 1907.

WHEN Vasco de Gama rounded the Cape of Good Hope, he enlarged the world of the Latin race and religion in a way almost comparable with the influences of Columbus's discovery of America on the Teutonic peoples and the scope of Protestantism. The rediscovery of the Old World was only second in importance to the discovery of the New World. In the fifteenth century the Turkish despotism sprawling over the wreck of the Byzantine Empire became a huge barrier between Asia and Europe, which shut off the West from intercourse with the East by the old overland road. What was then needed was the reverse of the policy of later Europe in its construction of the Suez Canal—a route to India that would avoid the Ottoman territory. Columbus had set out to find this route by circumnavigating the globe, when he stumbled on a new continent half-way round, and so surprised everybody by making a much more important discovery. Vasco de Gama attained the Genoese enthusiast's object in another and more effective way. He reached Asia by sailing round Africa. The immediate result was the establishment of the Portuguese dominions in India.

The Portuguese on their arrival in India found a Christian Church oppressed by Mussulman tyranny, which

at once welcomed the advent of a Christian power, in the hope of securing its protection. Although the Syrian Church in India was Nestorian and the European newcomers were Roman Catholics, for the moment no ecclesiastical or doctrinal differences were noticed. It was enough that both were Christian for the two parties to draw together in presence of their common foe, the infidel. The friendship was mutual. The Portuguese were glad to find friends in a strange land, and the Syrian Christians were grateful for the prospect of shelter from the persecution they were enduring under the Mohammedan rule. In the year 1502 they presented a petition to Vasco de Gama begging him to put them under the protection of the King of Portugal, to whom, in sign of subjection, they sent the old sceptre of their former Christian kings, a silver-mounted rod with three little bells, and at the same time handed over the copper plates containing their charters to the Portuguese authorities. It was not a conquest; it was a voluntary, eager, grateful action like that of the Jews welcoming Cyrus. These simple people little dreamed that what they took for an asylum was really a prison, that their deliverers were to become their gaolers. At first the wisdom of their course seemed to be amply justified. The most complete friendliness was established between the old inhabitants and the colonists. The Portuguese were freely admitted to the Syrian churches, and they attended amicably. It was only by degrees that the divergencies from Roman belief and practice were noted and commented on. When a change of attitude on the part of the Portuguese was brought about, this was owing to the importation of the worst product of Spanish cruelty—the Inquisition, and that was due to the presence of the Jesuits.

Nevertheless the Jesuits did not come in the first instance as inquisitors. Their expedition to India was undertaken with a positive and constructive end in view —not correction of error, repression, persecution; but evangelisation, the spread of the Christian gospel among

Mussulman and heathen people, the extension of the Church in the East to make up for the large slice of territory of which the Reformation had robbed her in the West. It was borne on a great wave of enthusiasm. Its leader was one of the most gifted, devoted, energetic, and successful missionaries the world has ever seen—Francis Xavier, the story of whose life belongs to the annals of the true saints.

Francis Xavier was born in the year 1506, the youngest son of a nobleman high in the employ of the King of Aragon. While teaching philosophy at the university of Paris he met Ignatius Loyola, then in his early dreams of the counter-revolution, who gradually wrought the spell of his fascinating personality over a reluctant scholar, till at last Xavier yielded to it and became one of the seven who in the year 1534 took the first Jesuit vow. The company intended to go to Palestine in order to convert the Saracens, and they left Paris and travelled as far as Venice with that end in view. Their further journey being delayed, Ignatius set Xavier to work in hospital nursing. Then a war that broke out between the Venetian Republic and the Ottoman Empire compelled the Jesuits to abandon their design of attempting work in the Holy Land, and Xavier was now ordered to join Rodriquez in an Indian mission. He reached Goa in May 1542, and there commenced his famous missionary career. Xavier found the Syrian Christians so dead to the evangelistic vocation of the Church, so absolutely exclusive and self-contained as a religious caste, keeping scrupulously aloof from their Mohammedan neighbours, that they regarded his efforts to convert these people with disapproval. For instance, he says that on one occasion, when he was about to baptise the child of a Mussulman, "the people of Socotra began to cry out that Mussulmans were unworthy of so great a blessing; that they would not let them be baptised, however much they deserved it, and that they would not permit any Mussulman to become a Christian." "Such," he adds, "is their hatred of Mussulmans."[1]

[1] Coleridge, *Life and Letters of St. Francis Xavier*, vol. i. p. 119.

Xavier's letters reveal the character of a man of sanguine temperament and affectionate nature, a Christian of deep, fervid devotion, true humility, and passionate earnestness for the winning of souls. His biographers surround his career with a halo of miracles; yet in his letters he lays claim to no such performances, a silence which admirers ascribe to modesty. In the breviary office for his festival he is said to have enjoyed the miraculous gift of tongues; but his letters show that he had to resort to an interpreter for communicating with the native population. These letters bring us close to the real man, and help us to form a vivid picture of his labours. Xavier would go about through the streets ringing a bell and inviting the people—men, women, and children—to come and hear him preach. The following is his own account of his method: "I used to preach to the people promiscuously," he says, "in the morning, on Sundays, and on holy days. In the afternoon I expounded the articles of the creed to the natives, and the crowd of hearers was so great that the church could hardly contain them. I afterwards taught them the Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary, the Apostles' Creed, and the Ten Commandments of the law of God. On Sundays I used to say mass for the lepers, whose hospital is close to the city, heard their confessions, etc."[1] Xavier established a college at Goa to hold five hundred students, which was partly supported by the government. After his first five months in Goa he set out with three students on a missionary journey, of which he gives a full description in his letters to the Society at home. Travelling barefooted, with a torn cassock and wearing a black stuff hat on his head, he visited the Paravas, a poverty-stricken people of low caste, with whom he spent fifteen months. Like our modern missionary he had found the Brahmin almost hopeless. Next he went to Travancore, which was partly heathen and partly Mohammedan; yet there he tells us that village after village received him with joy.

[1] Coleridge, *Life and Letters of St. Francis Xavier*, vol. i. p. 120.

Subsequently his tours extended to Ceylon—to Malacca—to the Molucca group—to Japan. At Kagoshuma, the most southerly small island of Japan, his converts were threatened with death. Moving on to the north he met with a better reception, though he found his ascetic ideal not so acceptable here as it had been in India. Still thirsting for more worlds to conquer for Christ and His Church, he projected a visit to China, and collected large sums of money for an extensive mission in the Celestial Empire, when he was stricken down with fever while on his way thither. He died at Sanchan, in the forty-seventh year of his age (A.D. 1552). The extraordinary amount of work accomplished by Xavier during so short a lifetime, and the passionate enthusiasm that was the inspiration of it, have enshrined his name in the hero-roll of the Church Universal. The story of his fruitful travel from country to country reads like an echo of the account of St. Paul's journeyings in the Acts of the Apostles. On the other hand, we must accept his glowing reports of his successes with caution. What, for instance, are we to think when we find him writing in one of his letters, "In the space of four months I made Christians of more than 10,000"?[1] Either this is gross exaggeration, or the Christianity was very superficial, or we have a miracle that throws Pentecost into the shade.

Now it was the great missionary Xavier who introduced the Inquisition into India. He did this in the burning earnestness of his zeal, not because he imagined that he could convert it into an engine for forcing the heathen into the Church—any such object was not in its province; but because he desired to have certain impediments to the growth and what he deemed the health of the Church removed out of its way. This institution was not invoked to plough up fallow ground; it was demanded in order to remove rocks of offence. In a letter written towards the end of the year 1545, Xavier begged the King of Portugal to establish the Inquisition in order to

[1] *Ibid.* p. 280.

check "the Jewish wickedness" that was spreading through his Eastern dominions. Fifteen years passed before the eager missionary's wish was granted. Xavier had died eight years before the terrible persecuting Spanish invention appeared on the field of his labours. Therefore he was not called upon to take part in its cruelty, and he must not be held responsible for the awful consequences of his mistake. In the year 1560 one of the four branches of the Inquisition was established at Goa. All the inquisitors were nominated by the King of Portugal, and their appointment was confirmed by the pope. Aiming primarily at the correction of Christians, it was also used against Jews, Mohammedans, and even heathen people. For, while the former were executed for heresy, many of the latter were punished for sorcery. The Inquisition at Goa was kept up till the year 1812, when it was abolished by a decree from the prince regent, Don José, at Rio Janeiro. Long before this it had done its worst in ruining the Portuguese Indian possessions.

The attitude of the Church of Rome towards heresy was bound to have grave effects on the Syrian Church in India. In the year 1546 the Franciscans had set up a college at Crangamore with the purpose of training priests of the Roman Catholic faith to become clergy in the Syrian Church. But it never came sufficiently into touch with the population. The Jesuits did better with their college at Vaipicotta, erected more than forty years later. Still, the Syrians held to their beliefs and customs. Mar Abraham, the catholicos, was accused on various charges by Aleixo Menezes, the papal "archbishop of Goa and primate of all the Indies." But he declined to submit to this alien authority. When he died, in the year 1597, his archdeacon, George, was appointed his successor in spite of the pope's prohibition. This man had informed Menezes that the Syrian Church had no connection with the pope of Rome. Here was material for a pretty quarrel. But the races of South India could not be expected to emulate Teutonic independence. The Syrian opposition to

Rome was crushed by the synod of Diamper which met two years later (A.D. 1599). The differences between the two bodies were brought to a climax at this synod, which was convened "for the increase of the Catholic faith among the Syrians in Malabar," together with the extirpation of heresy and the establishment of union under the papacy. The papal party assumed that previous to the Nestorian schism in the fifth century the Syrian Church had been subject to Rome. The synod was to put an end to a separation which had lasted for more than a thousand years. Although the Syrians were invited, the synod was dominated by Roman Catholic ecclesiastics, to whose decisions the native Christians were required to submit. It began by denouncing Nestorius and saluting Mary as the "mother of God." Then it substituted the Roman saints' days for the Nestorian calendar, anathematised the catholicos of Babylon, established the authority of the pope, ordered moral reforms in the Church, licensed the Jesuits to preach in the Syrian churches, commanded the celibacy of the clergy, and required married priests to dismiss their wives. One further consequence of the synod's decrees was the destruction of the old service books where these were not altered beyond recognition. Every book containing heretical doctrine that could be found was burnt. In fact, no efforts were spared to bring this ancient Church into line with Rome and under the absolute authority of the pope. And the Syrian Christians submitted. One hundred and fifty-three priests and six hundred and sixty lay procurators signed the decrees of the synod.

It was submission, but forced submission. For more than half a century the fires of discontent smouldered, and in the year 1653 they broke into open flames. A man named Atalla (*i.e.* Theodore), then ordained bishop by the catholicos of Babylon, and appointed by that supreme ecclesiastic of the Syrian Church, had no sooner landed at Mailapore than he was arrested by the Portuguese authorities, sent to Goa, and there delivered over to the Inquisition. This treatment of their new bishop roused the Syrians to a

white heat of indignation. They gathered together in thousands round the Coonen cross in a village near Cochin, and took an oath renouncing the Portuguese bishops. Since their own Syrian bishop was a prisoner in the hands of the enemy, these people elected a substitute, Mar Thomas I., for the temporary government of the province. But the result was a split of the Syrian Church, one party adhering to the Papal Church as Romo-Syrians, while the more daring spirits reverted to the Syrian usages. It is estimated that the former, known as Puthencoor, or the new community, now number about 110,000, while the latter, the Palayacoor, or old community, amount to about 330,000.

Ten years later the Dutch obtained possession of Cochin. These new masters ordered foreign Roman Catholic ecclesiastics out of their territory, and the Syrians continued to obtain their bishops from the catholicos of Babylon. But in the year 1665, Gregorius, the Jacobite metropolitan of Jerusalem, appeared among the Syrian Christians at Malabar. These people were at the time without a consecrated bishop, the communication with the catholicos having broken down. For twelve years they had been served by Mar Thomas, the bishop whom they had elected, but who had not received episcopal ordination. Gregorius now duly consecrated Thomas to his office, at the request of his flock, in spite of the fact that the metropolitan was a member of another communion which stood in relations of mutual excommunication to his Church. Gregorius remained in the country administering the affairs of the Church conjointly with Thomas. In this way the Nestorian Church in India passed under Jacobite rule—voluntarily, and apparently without any consciousness of the irregularity of its action. We could not have a plainer proof of the condition of indifference to theological dogmas to which it had arrived. So things went on till the end of the century, apparently giving rise to no confusion of teaching or clash of customs. The Church was ruled by a succession of Jacobite prelates, some of

whom attempted practical reforms, but apparently never exciting any theological interest in their own peculiar tenets. Evidently theology was dead in the Church, and the vitality of the Church itself was not very vigorous. But a silent current was flowing towards the Jacobite position. This is proved by what happened early in the eighteenth century, when Mar Gabriel, a Nestorian bishop, came to Malabar. Neither the metran (metropolitan) nor his people would acknowledge him or permit him to preach in the churches. But this inhibition may have been more due to his polemical airs than to any local objection to his heresy, for he was described as an implacable enemy of the Jacobites. He was able to detach a small following of Syrians whom he brought back to their old Nestorianism. In the year 1751 the Jacobite patriarch of Antioch sent out a number of copies of Jacobite liturgies, but only on one occasion, in the year 1770, was the metran ordained by the Jacobite patriarch. Thus those who are much concerned with the question of orders have grave doubts concerning the status of the priesthood of the Syrian Church in India. It would appear that in many cases, to say the least, ordination has been irregular.

A new chapter in the history of this old Church opens with the introduction of English influences under the auspices of the Church Missionary Society. It was rightly seen that what the Nestorian Church most needed in the first instance was education, for the Syrian Christians, clergy as well as laity, were found to be sunk in gross ignorance. Accordingly in the year 1813 a college was opened. The English missionaries were disposed to hope that if the Roman corruptions could be removed the Syrian Church would return to its pristine simplicity. But longer experience showed them that their task of restoring evangelical Christianity would require a more radical reformation. At first the native metrans welcomed the co-operation of the missionaries; but later on a hostile spirit was manifested towards the foreign intruders. A mistake was made by Bishop Heber at Bombay in highly honouring the

bishop, who had been sent to Malabar by the Jacobite patriarch of Antioch to supersede the native metran, but who turned out to be a very undesirable personage. In the year 1835, Bishop Wilson held a conference with the Syrian clergy, and gave them some excellent advice on the need of ministerial training, the establishment of schools, the use of the vernacular in the prayers, instruction in the Gospels, and other improvements, in which they appeared to acquiesce, but which they entirely repudiated as soon as he had left them, even sending him back the 1,000 rupees he had given them. Perhaps something may be said for the Syrian side of the case. Excellent as was the good bishop's advice, he had come on a tour of inspection as the first "Metropolitan of British India." We can understand with what feelings the leaders of an ancient Church, proud of a history they dated back to the Apostolic Age, would regard a visit from this English clergyman with his high-sounding title, especially if we allow that Bishop Wilson was—as it is asserted—not deficient in British masterfulness.

After this the Syrian Church broke off relations with the Church Missionary Society. A little later, Mar Athanasius Mathew, a native of Malabar, became metran. This good man worked for years for the reform of his Church, in spite of local opposition and rivalry. His position was rather ambiguous, because, after priding himself on having been consecrated by the patriarch of Antioch, he denied that prelate's authority to depose him. After his death the question of the succession to the bishopric came into the law courts and gave rise to ten years of litigation. This question turned mainly on the right of the Jacobite patriarch of Antioch to supremacy over the Syrian Church in India. In point of fact, he had only ordained one metran accepted by that Church, Mar Athanasius, during the whole Jacobite period. The opposing party based their claim for independence on the earlier history of the Church when it was in communion with the Nestorian catholicos at Babylon and derived its orders from him, as well as on its own

habitual autonomy. But the judicial decision handed the see over to the Jacobite nominee, Mar Dionysius Joseph.

While there is little sign of progress in the Syrian Church as an organisation, many young men from this communion go to study at Madras University. Therefore, perhaps, these educated Christians of St. Thomas will come in time to insist on the introduction of more enlightened methods in the conduct of their Church, such as the extension of education and the higher training of the clergy; but that will only be the case if they remain loyal to the faith and Church of their fathers after passing through the mill of Western culture.

The Syrian churches which may be seen in South India to-day are constructed with Saracenic arches, sloping roofs, and buttressed walls. For the most part they are red in hue, and are built of stones squared and polished in the quarries. They have bells cast in native founderies. The traveller off the lines of modern missions may be startled to hear the sound of church bells among the hills, indicating the neighbourhood of some old church of the Syrian Christians.

Lastly, we have traces of Syrian Christianity in China. Its origin has not been discovered, and some have doubted its ever having existed. But there is clear evidence that the early Nestorian missionaries or their successors penetrated into the interior of the Celestial Empire. In the year 1625 the Jesuits found a marble tablet, 7½ ft. high and nearly 4 ft. broad, buried under some ruins at Singanfu, a large city on the Yellow River, formerly the capital of the empire. This tablet is entitled "A monument commemorating the introduction and propagation of the noble law of Ta t'sin in the middle kingdom." In the upper part there is an incised cross, beneath which is an inscription in Syriac and Chinese, first setting forth a vague abstract of Christian doctrine, and then recording the chief events of a Syrian mission in China. It tells how a missionary named Olopan came from Judæa to China in the year 636, having escaped great dangers by sea and land,

and was met by an official of the emperor and lodged in the imperial palace, where his law was examined, with the result that its truth was acknowledged. Thereupon, according to the inscription, the emperor issued an edict in favour of Christianity, ordered a church to be built, and nominated twenty-one persons to serve it. So much for the beginnings. Then follows a chronicle of the mission from the year 636 to the year 780 (in the inscription 1092 of the Greek era). At first there was success, and the Christians prospered unmolested. This went on for two generations. In the year 699 there came a change, and the Church was persecuted; a second persecution broke out fourteen years later, after which the Christian again entered on a happy time. This was under the Emperor Hinem-cum. At a later time a second mission appeared, in consequence of which many churches were built, and Christianity was patronised by a succession of emperors. The tablet also contains a list of clergy.[1]

The antiquity and genuineness of this tablet are not altogether above suspicion. It might be expected that if so great progress had been made in early times, more indications of it would be apparent in the present day. The account of the notice taken of this mission by the emperors and their active patronage and assistance is certainly remarkable; it calls for confirmation that is not forthcoming. Accordingly some have held that the whole thing is an impudent fraud of the Jesuits.[2] That, however, is highly improbable. What motive would these zealous proselytes of the papal party have had for producing false evidence in favour of the venerable antiquity and former high status of the Syrian Church?[3] Besides, we have other evidence of the existence of Christianity in China not far from the times of the tablet.

The canon of Theodore, bishop of Edessa in the year

[1] There is a facsimile of this tablet in Yule's *Marco Polo*, vol. i. p. 21.

[2] Renan was very dubious about it. See *Hist. Ltng. Semit.* p. 202.

[3] See Mosheim, *Church Hist.* vol. ii. pp. 151, 152, notes *a*, *b*, for a learned discussion of this question.

800, refers to "Metropolitans of China, India, and Persia, of the Merozites of Siam, of the Raziches, of the Harinos, of Samarcand, which are distant and which by reason of the infested mountains and turbulent sea are prevented from attending the four yearly convocations with the catholicos, and who therefore are to send their reports every six years."

In the year 845 the Emperor Wu Tsung condemned 4,600 Buddhist monasteries to be destroyed, and at the same time ordered three hundred foreign priests "to return to the secular life, that the customs of the empire might be uniform."[1]

Further, two Arab travellers of the same century have left accounts of their discoveries of Christianity in China. One of them, Ebn Wahab, describes his conversation with the emperor about the contents of the Old and New Testament. Another indication of ancient Syrian Christianity in China is to be seen in the discovery in the year 1725 of a Syrian manuscript containing large portions of the Old Testament and a collection of hymns which was in the possession of a Chinaman.[2]

In the tenth century—so dark in Western Europe—the Nestorians introduced Christianity into Tartary proper. Three centuries later (A.D. 1274), Marco Polo says that he has seen two churches in the city of Cingianfu built by Nestorians. He states that "the Great Khan sent a baron of his whose name was Mar Sarghis [? Sergius], a Nestorian Christian, to be governor of this city for three years. The two churches were built during that time."[3] A little further on Marco Polo tells us of some people called Alans who were Christians, but who lost a city they had captured by their drunkenness.[4]

The legend of Prester John, so widespread and so long enduring in the East, wild and fantastic as it has become, is based on the idea of the conversion of a Mongol

[1] Du Halde, *China*, vol. i. p. 518, quoted in Broomhall, *The Chinese Empire*, p. 6.

[2] *Ibid.* [3] Yule's *Marco Polo*, vol. ii. p. 162. [4] *Ibid.* p. 163.

tribe called Karith, living on the confines of China. The hero of the legend is said to have been the king of this people, and to have lived at Kara-Korum, a city on the Orchar about six hundred miles west of Pekin. His original name and title were Ung or Avenk Khan; but coming under the Christian influences of the Syrians he was converted, and then he received his baptismal name and title, Malek Juchana, *i.e.* King John. His niece, who also became a Christian, was said to have been married to Tuli, the son of Genghis Khan. If the story is correct, like Bertha of Canterbury, she introduced the faith of Christ to her pagan husband's court, with the result that a succession of kings of the tribe of Karith professed Christianity.[1]

In the year 1145 the Syrian bishop of Gabala (*Jibal*, in Laodicea of Syria), coming to Europe to lay his grievances before Pope Eugenius III., reported that not long before, a certain John, living in the Far East, a king and Nestorian priest, claiming descent from the three wise kings, had made war on the *Samiard* king of the Medes and Persians, and had taken Ecbatana their capital. Proceeding to deliver Jerusalem, he was stopped by the Tigris and by the sickness of his army.[2] The probability is that this story refers to a raid by some Armenian prince. The Crusading project of rescuing Jerusalem and the stoppage of it at the Tigris do not point to China.

Great as was the fame of the mysterious John, possibly attached to more than one real or mythical person in more than one locality, it was not undisputed. For example, Friar William of Rubruch, who preceded Marco Polo by a few years, and travelled in these Eastern parts during the years 1253 to 1255, when referring to a famous Mongolian chieftain, says, "The Nestorians used to call him King John, and to say of him ten times more than was true, for this is the way of the Nestorians who come from these parts. Out of nothing they will make a great story, and so great reports went out concerning this King

[1] See Asseman, tome iv. p. 494; *Marco Polo*, vol. i. p. 234 ff.

[2] Yule's *Marco Polo*, vol. i. p. 228, note ff.

John; though when I went through his pasture lands no one knew anything of him save a few Nestorians."[1]

Friar William's unkind remarks about the Nestorians are not quite fair. It was not they who invented the legend. The true origin of it is to be found in the West, where it grew up out of vague reports of distant Oriental travel, and whence it was transported to the region inhabited by the Nestorians, who no doubt were glad to welcome so flattering a story and not reluctant to make the most of it.

Roman Catholicism was introduced into Tartary and China in the thirteenth century, when Pope Nicholas IV. sent John de Monte Corvino to the court of Kublai Khan, the founder of the Yuën or Mongol dynasty in China. Cut off from communication with Europe, this missionary laboured till his death at the age of seventy-eight (A.D. 1307), and left behind him a translation of the whole New Testament and the Psalter in the language of the Tartars. There are existing letters in which—if they are genuine—Kublai Khan requests the pope to send one hundred missionaries to his country. Troubles in the papacy at home put a stop to the promising missionary enterprise. In the sixteenth century the Jesuit mission to China projected by Xavier was carried out by Father Ricci, who established himself at Shaoking and cleverly worked his way on to Pekin, founding missions by the way at Nauchang Fu, Suchow Fu, and Nanking Fu. He died in 1610. In 1631 Dominican and Franciscan missionaries arrived in China, and a bitter controversy with the Jesuits was the consequence. Trouble also came from the break-up of the Ming dynasty and the rise of the present Manchu power.

By the year 1637, the Jesuits had published 340 treatises on religion, philosophy, and mathematics in the Chinese language. These energetic servants of the Church and the papacy have been accused of being remarkably accommodating in adapting the beliefs and requirements of Christianity to Chinese ideas and customs. They even succeeded in winning over Chung-chi, who became the

[1] Hakluyt Soc., Second Series, iv., 1900.

first Christian emperor of the Mongolian race. On his death the mandarins, holding the reins of government during the youth of his son, turned against the Jesuits, of whose privileges they had become very jealous, and commenced a persecution (A.D. 1664). The chief of the Jesuits, John Adam Schaal, then an old man, who had held an honourable place at court, was flung into prison and ultimately executed, while the other missionaries were driven into exile. About five years later, the young heir, Kang-hsi, assumed the government and at once reversed this policy of the regency, and recalled the Jesuits. The new emperor proved to be a man of noble and generous spirit. He valued the Jesuits so greatly that he sent to Europe for more of the order, and set these men in the highest positions in the State. Thus the awakening of China under the influence of Europe which we are witnessing to-day seemed to be promised more than two hundred years ago.

The famous Emperor Kang-hsi continued to favour the Jesuits during the whole of his long reign of sixty years, and built them their magnificent church at Pekin. At the death of this emperor in the year 1722, the imperial favour ceased, and the Jesuit influence declined. But the Roman Catholics have ever since claimed a political status in the empire.

Protestant missions in China were begun in the year 1807 by Dr. Morrison. In the year 1907 there were 3,719 Protestant missionaries in the empire, with 9,998 native helpers, 154,142 communicants, 706 stations and 3,794 out-stations, 366 hospitals and dispensaries, 2,139 day schools, 42,738 pupils, 255 boarding and higher schools, containing 10,227 pupils.[1]

[1] Broomhall, p. 40.

CHAPTER VI

THE ARMENIAN CHURCH

(*a*) Langlois, *Collection des Historiens Anciens et Modernes de l'Arménie*, including Agathangelos, Moses of Chorene, "the Herodotus of Armenia" (5th century), etc.; Vartabet Matthew, *Life of St. Gregory the Illuminator* (trans. by Malan); *The Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Church* (trans. by Malan); *Vitæ Sanctorum Calendarii Armeniaici* (12 vols. pub. Venice, 1814); Asseman II.; Le Quien, *Oriens Christianus*, vol. i.

(*b*) Fortescue, *The Armenian Church*, 1872; Issaverdenz, *Armenia and the Armenians* (2nd edit., 1875–78); Tozer, *Turkish Armenia*, 1881; Bryce, *Transcaucasia and Ararat* (4th edit., 1896); Lepsius, *Armenia and Europe*, 1897; Lynch, *Armenia*, 1901.

ARMENIA is a name used for a country of indefinite and varying extent, centred at the southern slopes of the Caucasus and the high table-land which is a western projection of the plain of Iram, and which culminates in Mount Ararat. At the time of the Romans it was divided into Armenia Minor, west of the Euphrates, and Armenia Major, east of that river. Situated at the meeting point of vast and ambitious empires, Armenia has been tossed to and fro between them as the repeated victim of their shifting fortunes. After having been conquered by Alexander the Great and then placed under Macedonian supremacy, Armenia obtained a partial independence from the Romans, who set up a kingdom there, not attempting to incorporate it in their empire. But Parthia and Persia in turn seized hold of the country, which came to be divided between the Byzantine and Persian powers, with different degrees of autonomy in successive ages, until the Mongolian invasions swept over

it and at last the Mohammedan conquests brought the greater part of it under the sway of Islam. The Armenians, who are now largely scattered over Asia Minor and considerably represented at Constantinople, are an ancient, distinct race of the Indo-Germanic family with marked characteristics, among which is a keen business ability, that has enabled them to attain to wealth where it has been possible for them to do so, in face of oppression and persecution. They were neither Hellenised under the Byzantine Empire nor Latinised under the Roman. They have retained their own language and national characteristics in spite of the terrible series of destructive tyrannies to which they have been subject. In this respect, and in the hatred their commercial superiority has aroused, we may compare them to the Jews, whom they thus resemble more than any other race.

It is usual to divide the history of the Armenian Church into three periods — (1) A.D. 34–302, beginning with the legendary mission of Thaddæus to King Abgar, together with supposed visits of Bartholomew, Simon, and Jude;[1] (2) A.D. 302–491, from the mission of Gregory the Illuminator to the breach with the orthodox Church owing to rejection of the decrees of Chalcedon; (3) A.D. 491 to the present time, when the Church of Armenia has been entirely independent of Constantinople and doctrinally severed from the Greek Church. But the first of these periods is mythical; we have no clear evidence of any Christianity existing in Armenia previous to the fourth century, when Gregory Illuminator, the apostle of the Armenians, introduced the gospel to these people.

Gregory, who is surnamed "The Illuminator," because "Illumination" is the technical Armenian word for conversion, was born about the year 257, at Valarshabad (now represented by *Etchmiadzin*), the capital of the province of Ararat in Armenia. At the instigation of the Sassanid Sapor I. his father assassinated Chosroes I., the King of Armenia, for which act the dying king ordered the whole

[1] See Lynch, *Armenia*, vol. i. p. 277, note 2.

family to be slain; but Gregory, then a young infant, was saved and carried off to Cæsarea in Cappadocia, where he was brought up as a Christian. Subsequently he became an attendant of Tiridates III., the King of Armenia, who raised him to the rank of a noble. But, being true to his Christian faith, he angered his royal master by refusing to take part in a heathen sacrifice. "The twelve tortures of St. Gregory" are a series of torments with which the saint is said to have been punished for his disobedience. Unfortunately his contemporary biography has been so embroidered with legendary decorations that it is impossible to disentangle it from these later materials. We see Tiridates transformed into a wild boar for murdering a nun who is a member of a religious community that has taken refuge in Armenia in order to escape the Diocletian persecution, and who has refused his advances and got away from his palace after having been carried off for the royal harem. It is revealed to the king's sister that he can be restored if Gregory is brought up from the pit where he has been confined. This is done; whereupon Gregory brings back Tiridates to his human form, and cures the people who have been smitten with the plague. The saint is now encouraged to preach the gospel to the delighted king and nation, and he does so with very great effect.[1] After this we are compelled to be doubtful as to other details in the story, such as the statement of the large number of churches that Gregory built. Still, there is no question that the Illuminator was a successful missionary in Armenia, nor that from his time Christianity was the recognised religion of the State. This was before Constantine had adopted Christianity. Thus Armenia was the first country to receive and acknowledge Christianity as its national religion.

Gregory was consecrated bishop of Armenia by Leontius, the bishop of Cæsarea in Cappadocia. Taking the year of his release from the pit as A.D. 300, Mr. Malan assigns his consecration to the year 302. But as the earliest notice

[1] Agathangelos, 89.

of Leontius as bishop of Cæsarea is in the year 314 when he signed the canons of the councils of Ancyra and Neocæsarea, this may be a little too early. The connection between Armenia and the Cappadocian Cæsarea was kept up for a hundred years, after which it was broken by the Persian advance. St. Gregory is said to have exercised the functions of bishop for about thirty years, and then to have retired to a solitary life among the caves of Manyea, where he only lived for a twelvemonth, and died in the year 332. The tradition of his visit to Constantine with his sovereign, which subsequently grew into a splendid journey to Rome and reception by Pope Sylvester, is purely legendary and evidently false.[1] Gregory was succeeded in turn by his two sons, Rostaces and Bartanes, after whom in succession came two sons of Rostaces. Thus we see Gregory's personal and family influence long dominating the Church of which he was the founder. It must have been about the time of the last of these descendants of Gregory the Illuminator that Julian, when about to set out on his ill-fated Persian expedition, sent an insulting letter to Arsacius, King of Armenia, claiming his alliance and co-operation, and warning him that unless he acted according to the emperor's directions, his God in whom he trusted would not be able to deliver him from the vengeance of Rome.[2]

Towards the end of the fourth century Armenia had a famous bishop, or rather catholicos, as the head of the Armenian Church was now called, who was in office for thirty-four years. This was Norseses I. He too was related to Gregory the Illuminator. Norseses was present at the council of Constantinople (A.D. 381); he was put to death by Pharme, the King of Armenia.[3]

The original Armenian version of the Bible was made about the end of the fourth and beginning of the fifth centuries by Mesrob, a scholar from Edessa, with the help of a Greek scribe named Hrofanos—whom Scrivener

[1] Niceph. Callist. *H. E.* viii. 35; Moses of Chorene, 89. Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.* vi. 1.

[3] Le Quien, vol. i. 1375.

supposes to have been Rufinus—and two pupils named John and Joseph; it was based on the Greek text, and began with the Book of Proverbs. Near about the same time the Bible, or part of it, was also translated by St. Sahak, *i.e.* Isaac, who, however, only worked on a Syriac text. The present Armenian version appears to be a recension made shortly after the council of Ephesus.[1] There can be no doubt that the early possession of the Scriptures in the vernacular helped to enlighten and consolidate the Armenian Church and to fortify it for the trials it was called upon to endure.

After the murder of Norseses, the metropolitan of Cæsarea refused to allow his three successors to ordain. Isaac, the translator of the Bible, was the first to be empowered to resume this function, and he held office for forty years, during which time the native dynasty was overthrown by the Persians. The Armenian liturgy dates from the time of Isaac, which may be regarded as the golden age of Armenian literature. Then a cloud of troubles burst on the Church. In the year 440, Isaac was deposed by the Persians, who set a succession of their own nominees in his place.

We now approach the events that severed the Armenians from the main body of the Church in the East. They refused to accept the decrees of the council of Chalcedon (A.D. 451). Dr. Neale maintains that this was not because they sympathised with the Eutychian doctrine, but because they misunderstood the council's position and supposed it to favour Nestorianism. That may have been the case at the time, but it will not serve as a defence of Armenian orthodoxy in perpetuity. Nine years later, the archimandrite Barsumas, the leader of the turbulent band of monks who had violently attacked the opponents of Eutyches at the "Robber Council," and a staunch supporter of Eutychianism, sent his disciple Samuel into Armenia to confirm the Church of that country in its

[1] Scrivener, *Introduction to the Criticism of the New Test.*, 4th edit. pp. 148–154.

rejection of the council of Chalcedon. Thus Samuel became the propagandist of Monophysitism in the Armenian Church, and therefore, even if its attitude in disapproving of the fourth œcumenical council may have been at first due to a misapprehension, from the time of Barsumas's interference it was definitely drilled into the Monophysite doctrine. No doubt it was at a disadvantage in only having the views of the two extremists. The Armenians saw Nestorianism among their Syrian neighbours and rejected it; they were offered Monophysitism as its distinct opposite; but, unlike the Greek and Latin Churches, they did not have the *via media* of Catholic doctrine presented to them in its antagonism to both extremes. Under such circumstances it would have been a miracle if they had not become Monophysites. Still, forty years passed before there was any breach with the orthodox Church. This took place in the year 491, when the Armenian National Council assembled at Vagarshiabad formally anathematised the council of Chalcedon. From that time onwards the national Church of Armenia —now known as the Gregorian Church, after the name of its famous founder—has stood apart from the Greek Church, remaining in isolation down to the present day, in spite of repeated attempts at reunion.

In the year 535 there was held the famous council of Tiben, which anathematised the orthodox Church of Jerusalem and added the Monophysite clause, "who was crucified for us," to the Trisagion, at the same time confirming the union of the feasts of the Nativity and Epiphany (or baptism of Christ) in opposition to Catholic usage. So important has this council been reckoned in Armenia, that the national calendar has been dated from it—though starting with a wrong year—A.D. 531, four years too early.[1]

Towards the end of the sixth century there was a temporary schism resulting from an attempt on the part of the Roman Emperor Maurice to bring back the Armenians to the orthodox fold. The Armenian monarch, Chosroes II.,

[1] Le Quien, *Oriens Christianus*, vol. i. 1383.

owed his throne to Maurice, who thus acquired paramount influence in Armenia. Chosroes even gave him the province which had been under the Persian dominion. In this way Tiben, where the catholicos then resided, was transferred to the Roman Empire. It was natural, therefore, that an orthodox emperor, accustomed to rule over the Church in his dominions, should expect the Armenians to come into line with the rest of his subjects. But Moses II., who was Armenian patriarch at the time, declined to change his creed at the bidding of a Greek despot, and refused to communicate with those bishops of the transferred province of Taron who had given in their submission after a conference at Constantinople. Then Maurice appointed a rival catholicos, John of Cocosta. On the death of Moses, his successor, Abraham of Arastune, summoned a council of bishops, presbyters, and archimandrites, which decreed that all who refused to anathematise the council of Chalcedon should be banished from the country. This led to a formal secession from the Church by John and his party.

In the year 632 the Emperor Heraclius assembled a council of Greeks and Armenians at Carana (the modern *Erzeroum*), which after a month's discussion came to an agreement in anathematising the decisions of Tiben and accepting the Chalcedonian position. The one champion of Armenian orthodoxy was John Maracumensis, who was a candidate for the post of catholicos. He was condemned at this council to banishment, condemned again at a second council, branded on the forehead with the figure of a fox by the prætor of Roman Armenia, and driven away to Mount Caucasus. But he had his disciples who cherished the seed of the old Armenian faith, and who eventually succeeded in restoring it in the national Church. Then came the Mohammedan conquest. But again the country was forced to a nominal acceptance of Greek orthodoxy, when Justinian II. temporarily recovered Armenia to Christendom, and the catholicos Isaac III. and his bishops were summoned to Constantinople, where they were induced

to give in their adherence to the creed of Chalcedon (A.D. 689). On their return home this act of weakness was repudiated by their Church, and the reconquest of Armenia by the Saracens enabled the National Church to revert to its old position. This was confirmed in a famous synod summoned by the command of the General Omar at Manaschiertum on the confines of Hyrcania in the year 715. It was politic for the Saracens to promote an ecclesiastical schism that divided their Christian subjects from the Byzantine Empire. At this synod there were six Jacobite Syrian bishops; and it resulted in the fusion of the two communions on the basis of the Monophysite doctrine, except that the Julianists,[1] who were well represented in Armenia, held aloof. After this the affairs of the Armenian Church pass into obscurity.

Even in spite of the rejection of the decrees of Chalcedon the severance of the Armenian from the Greek Church was gradual, fluctuating, and long indefinite. This is proved by the fact that there were Armenian bishops at the three succeeding œcumenical councils—II. Constantinople (A.D. 553); III. Constantinople (A.D. 680); and even II. Nicæa (A.D. 788)—and that the decrees of those councils were acknowledged in Armenia. As late as the year 1166 the catholicos Narses, writing to the Emperor Manuel Comnenus, distinctly repudiated the Eutychian heresy. But then he did not accept the Chalcedonian definition. The position assumed by his Church all along when not disturbed by foreign influences was that its doctrine was ancient primitive Christianity, not Eutychian nor any other peculiar theology, and that the council of Chalcedon had been false to that teaching in leaning towards Nestorianism.

During the mediæval period the Armenians were not represented by any conspicuous ecclesiastic or theologian, and yet the eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries all contributed some works to Armenian literature. Turks and Byzantines now made Armenia their battlefield, and the miserable people suffered only less from the latter than from the former. For three centuries the

[1] See p. 120.

country was swept by nomadic tribes, and can scarcely be said to have had a national existence. The devastating rush of Timour came with fatal force over Armenia. The peasants were driven from the plains, and the whole population reduced to the depths of poverty and misery. Many hid in the mountains. Not a few in despair accepted Islam and intermarried with Kurds. Others escaped to Cilicia and Cappadocia, and there became the nucleus of the Christian kingdom of Lesser Armenia, which contrived to exist in independence, though ringed round with Moslem provinces and not in alliance with the Byzantine Empire. These Western Armenians joined hands with the Crusaders, and when communications with Europe were reopened began to develop the remarkable commercial genius for which the race has been famous all around the Mediterranean down to our own day. Unfortunately this same facility of communication with Europe opened the way for papal aggressiveness. In the year 1335 there was formed an Armenian Uniat Society, which accepted the Roman Catholic form of Christianity. At the council of Florence (A.D. 1439) this body was designated "the United Armenian Church." Subsequently it suffered some persecution from the national Church of Armenia and its patriarch.

The well known monastery of the Mechitaristes on the island of St. Lazaar near Venice belongs to the Uniat Armenian Church. It is named after its founder Mechitar, who was born at Sebaste in Asia Minor in the year 1676, and who entered an Armenian convent at Erzeroum in 1691, but afterwards obtained permission to study at Etchmiadzin. Finding that he could learn little there, he got further permission to go to Rome; but owing to illness was only able to proceed as far as Constantinople, where he fell in with some able Roman Catholic ecclesiastics, under whose influence he joined their Church. Subsequently he founded an order of Armenian monks under a modified Benedictine rule, which was sanctioned by Pope Clement XI., who made Mechitar the head of the order

with the title of abbot. This was at Modan in the Morea, then under Venetian rule. The conquest of the peninsula by the Turks led Mechitar and his monks to migrate in the year 1715 to Venice, where the Senate granted them the island of St. Lazaar. This monastery became an important centre of scholarship, and the monks devoted themselves to the spread of Armenian literature and education. The Cœnobite Armenian monks of the national Church follow a form of the rule of St. Basil; those who live a hermit life belong to an order of St. Anthony.

When Constantinople fell into the hands of the Turks (A.D. 1453), the Armenian bishop of Brusa was appointed patriarch by Mohammed II., and put under the patronage and control of the Ottoman government in a similar way to that in which the Greek patriarch was treated. He became the political head of his nation, and through his bishops he was made responsible for the government of his people, with authority in civil as well as in religious matters. For this purpose the Christian population was divided into communities called *millets*. The patriarch was supported by a council of bishops and clergy, and each bishop was set over his own province. The result was the same as among the Greeks. The Church was degraded by being made subject to chief clergy who were also officials of the Turkish government, and slavish sycophancy prevailed among these officials themselves. Still, the Armenians gained something in having a legal constitution under guardians of their own nationality. At first this only applied to the Western Armenians, who had been involved in the fall of the Byzantine Empire; but in the year 1514 the Osmanli Turks under Selim I. conquered Armenia proper, and Idris the historian, a Kurd from Biltis, was then entrusted with the task of organising the province. In order to hold the district effectually, he transplanted into it a number of people of his own nationality. Thus from this time onwards the population of Armenia has been mixed, consisting mainly of the two races—Armenians and Kurds. Therefore, while on the one hand many Armenians have

left their country because of its successive troubles and settled in Asia Minor, Constantinople, and other Western places, after the manner of the Jewish "dispersion," in the present day the land is largely stocked with a rude, alien, Mohammedan race, inferior to the original inhabitants both in civilisation and in morals. The two races have never coalesced. Religious more than racial differences have kept them apart. This fact should be borne in mind when we consider the Armenian problem. Armenia is no longer a geographical term in any national sense; it represents a persecuted people, almost living as outlaws both in their own original land and in many other places, chiefly Turkish, Russian, and Persian.

In the year 1603 the catholicos Melchizedic called in the aid of the Persian Shah Abbas to deliver his people from Turkish oppression; but after over-running the land the shah transported many of the Armenians by force into his own country, where he concentrated them in a colony near Ispahan. For two centuries after this Armenia was trampled on alternately by contending Turkish and Persian armies. The Church was also suffering degradation from the sale of the office of catholicos. There was a dispute between the Armenian patriarchs at Constantinople and Jerusalem and the catholicos as to the supremacy of the latter. In the year 1655, Philip, an able man, only second to St. Isaac of the patristic period as a great ecclesiastic, consolidated the Church by inducing the two patriarchs to submit to him as catholicos of all the Armenian Christians. But now the Armenians were disturbed by Jesuit missionaries, and the office of catholicos again fell into unworthy hands, so that during the first half of the eighteenth century the Church was in a deplorable condition. This was the time of the catholicos Lazar, who left behind him an ill name. But in the time of Simon, who came into office in the year 1763, things began to improve under Russian influences.

Russia acquired Georgia in the year 1801; and in 1828 she took possession of part of Armenia, including the

ecclesiastical capital, Etchmiadzin, with the result that the catholicos of the Armenian Church became a Russian citizen. Henceforth that ecclesiastic was responsible to the tsar, though still elected by his own bishops. His powers were now limited by a synod, after the Russian pattern.

Protestant and evangelistic work was commenced in Armenia in the year 1831 by American missionaries. In 1846 the catholicos anathematised all Armenians who accepted Protestant notions, with the result that a separate Protestant Church was founded as the "Evangelical Church of the Armenians." In spite of opposition from France and Russia, the British ambassador succeeded in getting this recognised officially as a *millet*. The American missionaries founded Armenian colleges on the Bosphorus, at Kharput, Marsivan, and Aintab.

Meanwhile the greater part of the Armenian nation still remaining under the Ottoman government suffered continuously from its ruinous extortion and recurrent acts of violence. Consular reports have poured in an unbroken stream of information as to the outrages perpetrated by the Kurds at the instigation of the Ottoman rulers. By the treaty of San Stephano, Turkey promised Russia to carry out reforms "in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians, and to guarantee their security against the Kurds and the Circassians." But on the insistence of Lord Beaconsfield the treaty of Berlin (1878) abrogated the Russian protectorate of the Armenian Christians, and conferred it on the six signatory powers, to whom Turkey gave the pledge of reforms in Armenia. In the same year, by the Cyprus Convention, the sultan promised Great Britain to introduce necessary reforms "for the protection of the Christians and other subjects of the Porte" in the Turkish Asiatic territories. Thus first the protection of the Armenians was granted to and accepted by Russia; then it was taken from Russia and assumed by Europe, but with an additional responsibility assumed by England in obtaining her own special pledge from the sultan. All

this has been a dead letter. No reforms have been carried out. No compulsion has been put on the Turks to have the sultan's pledges fulfilled. It is true that in 1880 identical notes were presented to the Porte by the powers, and that in 1881 the British ministry sent a circular note to the five other signatory powers in the Berlin Treaty; but these powers, especially Germany and Russia, were disinclined to act, and it was only fleets and armies that could move Turkey. Thus the nominal "Concert of Europe" came to an end. Since then successive British ministries have called the attention of the sultan to his failure to keep his promises pledged in the Berlin Treaty. These communications have only been replied to with polite evasions.[1]

In the year 1895 the world was appalled by the awful news of the Armenian Massacres. Information came through by degrees, till at length the total was summed up at figures growing from 20,000 to 25,000, 50,000, and even 120,000, besides 5,000 to 6,000 massacred at Constantinople. Men, women, and children had been done to death amid scenes of unspeakable horror and outrage. It seems clear that the Ottoman government had been alarmed by reports of a revolutionary movement, to which the more daring of this long-enduring nation had been goaded by the unchecked irritation of Turkish misrule. But the mass of the people had not taken any steps towards rebellion. How could they have done so with any hope of success, since weapons were forbidden to Christians, while Kurds and Turks went about fully armed? Moreover, the massacre overwhelmed the innocent. There was no attempt to select the suspected revolutionists. Yet there was a species of very careful discrimination which pointed to orders from headquarters, and disposed of the excuse for Turkey which her champions would urge, that

[1] While this chapter is in the press the newspapers are recording the rejoicings of Turkey in the establishment of a constitution with freedom for all on the sworn promise of the sultan. The reader will know with what results.

all this was but an outbreak of Kurdish savagery. The slaughter was confined to two classes of Armenians—the Gregorians of the national Church, and the Protestants. Uniats were spared as under the protection of France, and members of the Greek Church for fear of Russia.

DIVISION V

THE COPTIC AND ABYSSINIAN CHURCHES

CHAPTER I

ORIGIN AND EARLY HISTORY OF THE COPTIC CHURCH

(*a*) Eusebius; Socrates; Sozomen; Theodoret; Evagrius; John of Ephesus; Cosmas Indicopleustes, *Typographie Chretienne* (6th century); John of Nikiou, *Chronicle* (7th century), French trans., 1883; Malan, *Documents of the Coptic Church*, Eng. trans.

(*b*) Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, chap. xlvii.; Neale, *Patriarchate of Alexandria*; Hefele, *History of the Councils*, Eng. trans., vols. iii., iv.; Vlieger, *Origin and Early History of the Coptic Church*, 1900; Dorner, *Doctrine of the Person of Christ*, Eng. trans., Div. II. vol. i.; Leipoldt, *Schenute von Atripe*, 1903.

THE Coptic Church is the ancient national Church of Egypt, which was separated from the Greek Church in the fifth century because it did not accept the decision of the council of Chalcedon, just as the Syrian Church had been cut off by its refusal to admit the verdict of the council of Ephesus. While the Syrians adhered to Nestorianism, the Copts maintained its extreme opposite — Monophysitism. It is not correct to call them "Jacobites" —the title of the Syrian Christians who hold the same doctrine, because their position is independent of the more Eastern movement, and dates back to an earlier period. The few Egyptian Christians in communion with Constanti-

nople and the Greek Church are known as "Melchites," the followers of the imperial policy. The name "Copt" is an adaptation of the Greek *Aiguptos*, originally used for the Nile and then for the land of the Nile, which is a Hellenised form of the old Egyptian title, *Ha-ka-Ptah*—"Houses of Ptah," the land where Ptah dwells. The Arabs call the Copts *Qubti*. Thus the name simply means Egyptian.[1] It has come to have an ecclesiastical significance, because most of the Copts are of the Monophysite Church in Egypt, while the Mohammedans are known as Arabs, although in the mixture of races now occupying Egypt Berber and Nubian blood is mingled with that of the conquerors from Arabia as well as such of the native Egyptian stock as went over to the Muslim faith. In the towns the true Egyptians are mainly Christians; but the Fellaheen of the country, evidently constituting the original indigenous peasant race, as their resemblance to the ancient monuments testifies, have been absorbed to a great extent into Islam.

The Egyptian Church is undoubtedly one of the most ancient churches in the world, dating back almost if not quite to apostolic times, although, like the Eastern Syrian, and even the Roman churches, it can furnish no historical record of its origin. The commonly accepted tradition that it was founded by St. Mark cannot be traced with certainty earlier than the fourth century;[2] and the fact that this tradition is not to be found in Clement of Alexandria, Origen, or any other writer of the second and third centuries, raises our doubts about its historicity. On

[1] Vlieger, *Origin and Early History of the Coptic Church*, p. 7. This etymology is now almost universally accepted. Others, now rejected, are the derivation from the town *Coptos*, and worse than that, the derivation from the Greek κόπτω, indicating either (1) schism, or (2) circumcision.

[2] It is found in the apocryphal *Acts of Barnabas*, which may perhaps be as early as the third century. The first reference to it in history is by Eusebius, who only makes it in the form of an allusion to a tradition that he does not undertake to authenticate: "and *they say* that this Mark was the first that was sent to Egypt, and that he proclaimed the gospel which he had written, and first established churches in Alexandria" (*Hist. Eccl.* ii. 16). Eusebius says that Mark was succeeded by Annianus "when Nero was in the

the other hand, the personal obscurity of St. Mark—apart from his authorship of the Second Gospel—is in its favour. Great ancient churches were eager to trace their origin to apostles. When Antioch, Alexandria's rival, claimed St. Peter for its founder and first bishop, it is not likely that the Egyptian patriarchate would voluntarily accept a second place by putting in a claim for no more important a person than that very apostle's secretary, unless some undeniable testimony had determined the matter. On this account, therefore, we may admit a shadowy probability that tradition is right here, and that St. Mark really did found the Church of Alexandria.

In Egypt it is usual to refer the Babylon from which the First Epistle of St. Peter is dated to the place of that name on the Nile, near where Cairo now stands, and the seat of an important bishopric in early Christian times. But if the apostle himself as well as his secretary had been living there, how shall we account for the absolute silence of antiquity as to St. Peter's residence in Egypt and its attributing the origin of the Church there only to St. Mark?

Although among the Nile villages Christianity has been suppressed by the Mohammedan tyranny, this melancholy fact should not blind us to the recollection that in early times it found a very fertile field in Upper Egypt. While Alexandria was largely Hellenised, the country parts farther south remained thoroughly Egyptian. The consequence was that the philosophic metamorphosis of the ancient cult, that gave it a new lease of life in the educated Greek area of Egypt, was never accepted or understood among the simpler folk of the rural districts. But conservative as these southern people were, they failed to hold to their old gods when they saw them trans-

eighth year of his reign" (ii. 24), *i.e.* in A.D. 62. If he means that Mark had died then, apparently a martyr to the Neronian persecution, this is not consistent with the tradition that Mark wrote his gospel at Rome under the influence of Peter, or, as our best authority Irenæus says, after Peter's death. After Eusebius, later references to Mark in Egypt—in Epiphanius, Jerome, Nicephorus, etc.—cannot be cited as affording additional testimony.

formed out of recognition by the Hellenic movement. Thus they had been flung into a state of bewilderment before Christianity appeared as a new claimant for their faith, with the result that the gospel won its way among them with the more ease. Meanwhile, in the Hellenised north Christianity was adopted and adapted by the specific culture of the age, and, whether in heretical Gnosticism or more orthodox Origenism, it there appeared with peculiarities that were never appreciated up the Nile. The consequence was a difference between the purely Coptic churches of the south and the Græco-Egyptian Church of Alexandria. At a later time we shall see this distinction emphasised by doctrinal divisions when the Byzantine party obtains influence at Alexandria and makes that city the seat of the Melchites, while the Copts hold their own position in the south. It is in the churches of the Nile valley that we have the real root and spring of the genuine old Coptic Church. These Copts cared little for the enlightened Alexandrian theology. Their literature consisted of the Bible and tales of saints and martyrs.

The Church in Egypt has the terrible but heroic distinction of being the most repeatedly and continuously persecuted body of Christians all down the ages of history, from the second century almost to our own day. These much tried people endured at least their full share of persecution under the Romans during the two or three centuries when Christianity was always illegal and at intervals fiercely assailed. Neale says that the Dominitian persecution does not appear to have reached Egypt, but that possibly there was some persecution there under Trajan. But the first persecution of which we have any information is that under Septimius Severus, which was concentrated with exceptional severity in this province, when Leonidas, the father of Origen, suffered martyrdom, a persecution to which the romantic story of Potamiæna belongs. Till this period the history of the Church is a blank. The Decian, which was the first of the really great persecutions deliberately designed to destroy

Christianity on lines of seriously planned State policy, fell with exceptional force on the Christians of Egypt. Then many fled to the desert, only to be seized as slaves by the Arabs. The Diocletian persecution was also severely felt in Egypt. In the year 311, Peter the bishop of Alexandria was beheaded without a trial by order of Maximin. So effectually were the horror and the heroism of this persecution branded into the memory of the Church that the Copts named the new era of Diocletian "the era of martyrs." Of course Egypt shared in the quiet of the breathing time under Galienus's edict of toleration, and in the peace of the Church that came in with the edict of Milan. But this peace proved to be disappointing and delusive. Persecution soon revived in new forms, now claiming Christianity itself as an excuse for harshness to Christians. The Arian heresy first appeared in Alexandria, and the worst of the consequent troubles were felt in that city, under the infamous rule of George the Cappadocian, whom Constantius forced on the Church, ordained, as the impartial pagan historian Ammianus says, "against his own and the public interest."[1] Athanasius tells us that "virgins were thrown into prison; bishops were led away in chains by soldiers; the houses of orphans and widows were plundered," etc.[2] According to Sozomen, George "imprisoned and maimed many men and women," and was "accounted a tyrant and became an object of universal hatred."[3] It is difficult to be very severe on the murderers of such a tyrant. They were pagans—not Athanasian Christians, as the Arians tried to show.

Arianism was suppressed; but new heresies disturbing the peace of the Church brought their train of troubles to Egypt. After the severance of the Monophysite party from the Greek Church, the imperial displeasure made life so hard for the Copts that they were ready to welcome the Arab invasion as a relief. But it was not long before they became the victims of Mohammedan

[1] *Amm. Marc.* xxii. 11.
[2] *De Fuga*, 6.
[3] *Hist. Eccl.* iv. 10.

persecution. With every change of masters they have hoped for better times; but whether under Arab, Kurd, or Turk, the Christians have always been the sufferers from each new invasion and fresh conquest of Egypt, in additional exactions, restrictions, wrongs, and insults. This went on until modern Europe interfered with Egyptian affairs, and, last of all, England brought equal justice to all classes and freedom in religion for all faiths.

Turning to the internal characteristics of the Egyptian Church, we may observe how in patristic times Alexandria and the Delta, the cultivated north, were marked by liberalism both in polity and in doctrine. The sacerdotal and episcopal claims of Catholicism were slower to make themselves felt here than in any other Church. Eutychius, a patriarch of Alexandria in the tenth century, records a very significant tradition throwing light on primitive times. He states that "St. Mark along with Ananias"—who is reckoned St. Mark's successor in the "episcopate"—"ordained twelve presbyters to remain with the patriarch; so that when the patriarchate should become vacant they might elect one out of the twelve, on whose head the other eleven should lay their hands, and give him benediction and constitute him patriarch."[1] After citing this statement, Neale adds that "so monstrous a story" would lead us to think the author a fabricator but for St. Jerome, who says that "at Alexandria till the middle of the third century the presbyters nominated and elected from among themselves to the higher dignity of bishop,"[2] He attempts to save the situation by advancing the alternative explanations, that either this was only an election by the presbyters, not a consecration, or the twelve must have constitued an "episcopal college."[3] Both of these hypotheses are purely conjectural. They imply a regularity of episcopal ordination that was not enforced in early times. Bishop Wordsworth has shown that presbyterian ordination

[1] *Annales in Migne*, tome iii. p. 982.
[2] *Epist.* 146.
[3] *Opus cit.* p. 11.

was not unknown.[1] It would appear that a presbyterian government was maintained in Egypt after it had been superseded by episcopal government in other provinces, and that even after the recognition of the three orders, the second order, the presbyterate, remained here more important for a long time. There were fewer bishops in proportion to the Christian population; the presbyters in the local churches over which they presided as individual pastors were more independent; and the personal prominence of conspicuous elders was more marked in Egypt than elsewhere. Nothing is more striking in the clerical development of the Catholic Church, than the disappearance of the elder from an active part in affairs. He seems to be squeezed out between the bishop and the deacon. He has his seat in the apse at the communion; but when we come to movements that excite public attention he is lost to sight, and we have only the bishop and his attendant deacon in view. But this picture does not represent the situation in Egypt, where we often meet with important elders. Two familiar examples spring into our minds immediately we reflect on the Alexandrian position. Origen was a presbyter—though ordained at Cæsarea and therefore not reckoned as such by his bishop Demetrius; Arius, too, was a presbyter. Further, Professor Harnack has shown that "unless all signs deceive us, we find that in Egypt generally, and especially at Alexandria, the institution of teachers survived longest in juxtaposition with the episcopal organisation of the churches, though their right to speak at services of worship had expired."[2]

[1] *The Ministry of Grace*, p. 140, where the 13th canon of Ancyra is cited, namely, "Country bishops (χωρεπίσκοποι) are not permitted to ordain (χειροτονεῖν) presbyters or deacons, nor even is it permitted to city presbyters to do so except with the licence (χωρὶς τοῦ ἐπιτραπῆναι) in writing of the bishop in each diocese." Here we see the city presbyter (1) reckoned above the country bishop, and (2) permitted to ordain presbyters and deacons, the only restriction on his liberty in this matter being the requirement of a written licence from his bishop.

[2] *Expansion of Christianity*, Eng. trans., vol. i. p. 451. Dionysius of Alexandria, in the latter part of the third century, referring to his visits to Egyptian villages, says, "I called together the presbyters and teachers of the brethren in the villages" (Eus. *Hist. Eccl.* vii. 24).

In the second place, when making a general survey of the early history of the Church in Egypt, we are struck with its intellectual energy and freedom. It had every advantage in these respects to start with. Alexandria was the centre of an old school of learning, where the grammarians pursued the study of the classics, and the rhetoricians preached from texts in Homer, the most venerable of those classics. It was also a seat of philosophical speculation, and here Neo-Platonism grew up side by side with Christian theology. The Jewish scholarship represented by the Book of Wisdom and the teachings of Philo taught people who used the Septuagint to combine its sacred authority with Platonic and Stoic speculations. As a great centre of commerce, Alexandria came under the influences of Rome and Athens, and combined these with Persian and even Indian ideas. The most cosmopolitan of all the great seats of scholarship, this city, when it received Christianity, was prepared to give the new doctrine the freest and most varied treatment. Here it was that the gospel came into contact with the widest, fullest, most energetic thought of the age. The faith that had first appeared among the valleys of Galilee was now launched on the ocean of the world's intellectual life. The inevitable consequences followed. Sometimes it was perverted out of all recognition; at other times, while retaining its essential features, it was enriched by a noble, reverent development of its vital truths. The danger in both cases was that it should become little else than a gnosis, an intellectual system, a Christian theodicy, explaining the universe in terms of God as revealed in Christ. From this fate it was saved in early times by persecution. The dungeon, the torture chamber, and the executioner's sword taught men to take their religion seriously as a matter of life and death.

Egypt was the birthplace of speculative theology, which may be said to have begun with the Gnostics in the first half of the second century. There was Syrian Gnosticism and Asiatic Gnosticism, but neither of these would bear compari-

son for a moment in regard to intellectual vigour or influence on the Church's thought with the Gnosticism of Alexandria. Irenæus and Hippolytus discussed and condemned a great variety of Gnostic systems; but all the while they had in mind the one system of Valentinus as the most serious rival of Catholic orthodoxy, winning its converts in the cultivated and fashionable Christian society at Rome as well as in many parts of the empire—and probably Valentinus was an Alexandrian.

Then it was in Alexandria that speculative Christian theology sprang up in opposition to the dangerous disintegrating Gnosticism of the heretics as itself a true gnosis. Clement calls the enlightened Christian a Gnostic. In his *De Principiis* Origen gives us the earliest treatise on systematic theology in the Church. These scholars of Alexandria wrote in Greek; they belonged to the northern Hellenised community of Christians; but we must not forget that this was on the Delta and by the Nile. Origen, the greatest of them all, was a Copt. Thus the most daring thinker in the early Church was not of the Hellenic stock, where we look first for the budding of the speculative intellect; he was of the race of men who built the Pyramids and Karnak, and wrote "the Book of the Dead," and gave the world the myth of Osiris.

Coming down a little later, we see Arianism — the heresy that most seriously divided the Church for two generations, the only heresy that ever had the upper hand in Christendom—first promulgated and first condemned in Egypt. But it is a remarkable fact that this system, while it arose at Alexandria, found more real support in Constantinople and other cities away from Egypt. That is one of the facts to be borne in mind when we find Origen and his school charged with the parentage of Arianism. A full enquiry brings out results in which two such very different scholars as Cardinal Newman and Professor Harnack are found for once to be agreeing. It is not to Alexandria, but to Antioch; not to Origen, but to Lucian, that we are to trace the seeds

and sources of Arianism.[1] Arius was condemned in his own Church at Alexandria quite early in the development of his teaching, and the place was soon made too hot for him, so that he had to escape. After that it is not likely that anything more would have been heard of Arianism if he had not made a convert of the influential Eusebius of Nicomedia, court chaplain to Constantine, a vigorous, astute, unscrupulous ecclesiastical politician. Subsequently, whenever the heresy is dominant in Alexandria, that is only owing to the forcible intrusion of an alien bishop, who obtains and holds the patriarchal chair by the aid of the imperial troops. In this way Arianism in Egypt came to be synonymous with tyranny and oppression, and its supremacy involved the Coptic Church in persecution.

It was not here, therefore, that the Copts were inclined to fall out of line with the Catholic Church. Their tendency drove them in quite the opposite direction. It pointed to the accentuation of the idea of the Divinity of Christ to the neglect of His humanity. Alexandria took the lead in opposition to Nestorianism. Here, as so often in other connections, the rivalry between Alexandria and Constantinople embittered the controversy, degrading it with political intrigue and the heat of offensive personalities. Cyril has been canonised and his writings are accounted standards of orthodoxy. But the unprejudiced reader must admit that they go a long way to prepare for the heresy that was to be condemned at the next œcumenical council, the denial of the two natures in Christ by the virtual suppresion of the human.

Eutyches followed on similar lines, and yet his development of the same trend of thought did not meet with the approval of the Church, and came under condemnation as a heresy. Now it is true that this heresy first appeared at Constantinople. Its advocate Eutyches was the archimandrite of a large monastery near that city. But he was a friend of Cyril, from whom he had received a copy

[1] See p. 43.

of the Acts of the council of Ephesus, and he had vigorously seconded the patriarch of Alexandria during the Nestorian controversy, behaving as a fiery opponent of Nestorianism. Moreover, Cyril's immediate successor Dioscurus was the champion of Eutyches and the author of the type of thought less crude than that the old archimandrite had expounded, which went by the name of the Monophysite heresy. The disgraceful proceedings of the "Robber Synod" were chiefly due to the conduct of Dioscurus and his monks—unworthy representatives of the Egyptian Church.

Again and again we see the turbulent Coptic monks leading the mob in some act of violence. At the storming of the Serapeum, in the murder of Hypathia, during the Monophysite disputes, when the worst deeds of violence were done, if this was not by the soldiery, it was by the monks who poured in from the Nitrian desert or some other distant retreat, crowding the streets of Alexandria, and stirring up the dregs of the populace to criminal outbreaks. We must remember that monasticism had first appeared in Egypt. Following the example of the Therapeutæ, first as solitaries in their huts and caves, then, in the second stage, founding the Cœnobite life, the Egyptian monks laid the foundation of the vast system that spread over Syria and Asia Minor, and finally took possession of the whole Church, to the extent of securing the position that though a man might be a monk without becoming a saint, he could not be a saint unless he had been first a monk. Now it is not to be denied that there were genuine saints among the monks. The ascetic life had a fatal attraction for the strongest natures; it seemed to present the loftiest ideal to them. Such a monk as Father Jeremiah, the hermit whom the Emperor Anastasius had known in his early days, and whom he highly honoured when he reached the imperial throne, appears to have been a really good man, unselfish and unworldly. No doubt there were many such, whose names have never been preserved in history. But herein lies the fatal evil

of the whole system as it was developed in Egypt. There were monks who behaved like savages—ignorant, superstitious, ferocious men. Some were guilty of nameless vice. But these degenerates were not the causes of the worst evil of monasticism. The worst mischief was wrought by the withdrawal of the best people from civic and domestic life. Thus the population of Egypt was checked in those very circles that should have dominated it if the character of the people was to attain a high standard, and the most serviceable men were withdrawn from the service of mankind. This was felt all over the empire. Eventually it became one of the causes of the fall of Rome. But nowhere did it have more serious consequences than in Egypt, the scene of the origin of monasticism and always that of its greatest popularity. Mrs. Butcher describes this rush to the monasteries as "the suicide of a nation."

One of the most famous of the Egyptian monks was Senuti, who lived during the second half of the fourth century and the first half of the fifth. The son of an Egyptian farmer, and brought up as a shepherd lad, he entered the monastery of Panopolis, near Athrebi, in Upper Egypt, and became a venerated monk, credited with supernatural powers, and known as the prophet. Cyril took him to the council of Ephesus, where he had a prominent place as a vehement, and if we are to believe his disciple and successor Besa, a violent part. According to this admirer of the venerated monk, Nestorius entered the council with great pomp, and, seeing the roll of the Gospels on the lofty throne in the centre of the hall, flung it down and seated himself there; whereupon Senuti picked up the volume and hurled it at Nestorius. Naturally the proud patriarch was indignant, especially when he learned that his assailant was of no ecclesiastical rank. Cyril quickly remedied that defect by creating his valiant henchman an archimandrite on the spot. How far this story is to be believed depends on what we think of its author in the sequel. He goes on to say that, when Cyril had started back for Egypt at the conclusion of the council without Senuti, the monk was

wafted across on a cloud. So highly venerated was he, that Maximus, the Roman commander, before setting out on an expedition against those obscure people called the Blemmys, sought him out in the desert for his blessing, much to the saint's annoyance at the interruption. The idea that he joined the extreme party of Dioscurus after the council of Chalcedon may be an error.[1] Be that as it may, undoubtedly he was a bitter leader in the persecution of Nestorius till the death of that unhappy ecclesiastic. Senuti is said to have lived to the wonderful age of 118, and to have died when Timothy Ælurus was patriarch. The remains of his writings are gathered up among the fragments of early Coptic literature. It is a singular fact that Senuti is never mentioned by any Greek or Latin author. Prominent as his friend Besa suggests his position at the council of Ephesus to have been, none of our other accounts of that council make the least reference to him. This silence rather favours the view that he did overstep the narrow line of orthodoxy in his unflagging opposition to Nestorianism. If that were the case, we can well understand why the friends and admirers of Cyril would observe a discreet silence with regard to a man who, though of dubious orthodoxy, had nevertheless been that great patriarch's chief trusted assistant. Among the Copts no saint could be more highly venerated; but the Copts are heretics.

The circumstances that led to the final severance of the Coptic Church have already been traced in earlier chapters.[2] The decree of Chalcedon deposing Dioscurus was the direct cause. The thirteen bishops who had accompanied him were in a terrible dilemma. Hieracles, their spokesman, pointed to a canon of Nicæa, declaring that the whole of Egypt should follow the bishop of Alexandria and do nothing without him. It was of no

[1] This is asserted as a positive fact by Salmon in Smith's *Dic. of Chr. Biog.* vol. iv. p. 612[a], but Leipoldt in his work, *Schenute von Atripe*, maintains that there is no evidence whatever of his having supported Dioscurus.

[2] Part I. chaps. v. vi.

avail. The papal legate who ruled the council treated their plea with contempt. "Have pity on us; have pity on us!" cried the feeble old men. No pity was shown them. They were forced to sign the deposition of their patriarch, and then packed off to Alexandria to see to the election of his successor. There they were met with a storm of indignation. Proterius, who had been serving as *locum tenens* for Dioscurus during his absence, and who therefore was presumed to be one of his supporters, now turned round to accept ordination on the lines of Chalcedon. This raised the passions of the populace to fever heat. We cannot be surprised that the excited people, hating the renegade for his treason to their banished patriarch, and taking advantage of the temporary weakness of the government at the death of Marcian, rose in a mad riot, and murdered the man they regarded as a Judas. Thus another red stain was added to the annals of the Coptic Church. When, on the death of the banished patriarch Dioscurus, Timothy Ælurus was elected his successor at Alexandria, the rivalry of the two parties in the city was revived. This was before the murder of Proterius; but that crime did not end the quarrel. The new Emperor Leo banished Ælurus, and a really good man, Timothy Surus or Salofaciolus, was elected to the patriarchate on the basis of Chalcedon. So highly respected was he that people would greet him in the street, saying, "Even if we do not communicate with thee, yet we love thee." Efforts were now made by moderate men to bring about a settlement that should unite the two parties. But the cleavage was too deep. It was racial as well as theological. The party of Chalcedon, the Melchites, were Greek; the Copts were Monophysite almost to a man. This is the secret of the obstinate continuance of the schism. It was a national movement, and the intrusion of patriarchs of the Greek persuasion was resented as an outrage on the rights of the national Church. The new Coptic patriarch, John Talai, who seems to have acted weakly if not dishonourably in accepting the vacant post on the death of the good Timothy (A.D. 482), when the emperor had

commissioned him only to try to bring about a reconciliation between the two parties, was really the representative of the national Church as against the Greeks, and of Christian rights and liberties generally as against imperial interference. It was the same even with that unworthy man Peter Mongus, whose election the emperor encouraged in place of John, since the patriarch's double-dealing had given great offence at Court.

Evagrius states that, as a result of Zeno's *Henoticon*—which simply silenced controversy without settling it, "when this had been read, all the Alexandrians united themselves to the holy Catholic and Apostolic Church."[1] That, however, is not correct. Evagrius is a fair-minded historian, but always too anxious to make as little as possible of ecclesiastical divisions—a rare fault in his age and venial. In point of fact, when Peter Mongus signed the *Henoticon*, the extreme Monophysites broke off from communion with him, and so earned the title of the *Acephali*. Still, there was outward peace; and this was maintained in Egypt under Zeno's successor, the amiable Anastasius, whose reign saw the quarrel transferred to Constantinople on account of the favour shown by the emperor to the Monophysites. On his death and the accession of Justin to the throne (A.D. 518), the temporary Monophysite triumph was ended, the *Henoticon* cancelled, and all the Church required to agree to the decision of Chalcedon, with the inevitable consequence that the temporary reunion of Egypt with the orthodox Church was ended. Thus the Copts were again cut off as a heretical body.

Then came the controversy on "The Three Chapters" under Justinian. The weak emperor had been persuaded to condemn Theodoret, Ibas, and Theodore of Mopsuestia as guilty of Nestorianism. It was suggested that the real objection to the council of Chalcedon lay in its approval of these three theologians, rather than in its doctrinal statements. Thus it was hoped that by making scapegoats of the dead men, who could not defend their case, all parties might

[1] *Hist. Eccl.* iii. 14.

be satisfied. The second council of Constantinople (A.D. 553) took a middle course, and, while anathematising "The Three Chapters" in which their supposed errors were set forth, exonerated two of them, Theodoret and Ibas, and only condemned the third, Theodore of Mopsuestia, who no doubt was the actual originator of Nestorianism. Thus this council leaned towards the Monophysite position. But the Egyptian Church took no notice of its decisions. Then came Jacob al Bardai and his vigorous campaign in Syria under the patronage of the Empress Theodora, the result of which was the separation of the Syrian Jacobite Church from the Nestorians and a great addition to the Monophysite strength in the East. Such a triumphant proselytising in favour of their theology could not but be very encouraging to the Copts. Unfortunately the new controversy with the Julianists on the incorruptibility of our Lord's body—which Julian of Halicarnassus had maintained—brought fresh trouble to the Church of Alexandria. It was a great pity that the Monophysites should now begin to quarrel among themselves just when they were becoming most powerful. But it was the same with the Protestants in the later days of Luther and Zwingli, and with the Methodists in the separation between Wesley and Whitfield. Expediency counts for nothing when men's convictions are at stake. The Julianist division at Alexandria facilitated the appointment of an orthodox patriarch—one of the Greek persuasion—who of course was acceptable to neither body of Monophysites. It is like the case in an English election when a Conservative is returned for a Liberal constituency because there is a split in the Liberal camp. In this case, however, the appointment of a Melchite meant the victory of the imperial over the popular party. Syria and in a measure Armenia, as well as Egypt and Abyssinia, were now of the Monophysite persuasion.

The Monothelete proposal was the last attempt at reunion with the lost provinces on doctrinal grounds. The case was desperate. The lopping off of these limbs

from the orthodox Church was a very serious matter when regarded from the Catholic standpoint. But another consideration gave urgency to the situation. First Persia, the age-long rival of the Roman Empire of the East, had become aggressive, and had carried its victories even into Egypt. Then a new terror had risen in the South, where it was least expected, and Arabia threatened ruin both to Church and empire in the sudden rise and triumphant march of Islam. Thus there was a strong political as well as a grave religious motive for uniting the divided Church and empire. Although proposed by the patriarch of Constantinople, the Monothelete idea was really put forth on lines of imperial policy. It was offered to the Church by the government; and it made some headway under the influence of authority. Cyrus the bishop of Phasis, on condition of accepting the novel doctrine, was made patriarch of Alexandria by the Emperor Heraclius (A.D. 630); and he won over some of the Monophysites. But he could not make much headway, and meanwhile Sophronius, the champion of orthodoxy, was successfully resisting the spread of the new heresy in the Greek Church. The *Ecthesis* which the Emperor Heraclius issued as an authoritative edict of religious doctrine (A.D. 638), plainly leaning towards the Monothelete idea, though approved by councils at Constantinople and Alexandria, never made any progress towards securing real conviction among the people of either party. The whole idea of this latest refinement of Christology was inept and futile. It deserved no better fate, for it was founded on policy, not on conviction; and it was promoted by State authority, not by religious reasoning. Equally political, equally resting on government influence, was the *Type*, which the Emperor Constans put forth in the year 648, and which, without pretending to favour either side, forbade any further controversy and threatened severe penalties against all who should dare to break the rule of silence. About thirty years later the heresy was condemned by the third council of Constantinople (A.D. 680–681).

None of these attempts at reconciliation, compromise, and suppression had succeeded in bringing back the Egyptian national Church into union with the Greek Church. It has ever since remained in separation. With the exception of some 6,000 Melchites, mostly Greeks, nearly all the Christians in Egypt at the present day are Monophysites. The national Church of Egypt, the Coptic Church, is of the same faith as the Jacobite Church in Syria.

Returning for a little to the internal condition of the Coptic Church during this period, we see that for sixty years after the banishment of John Talai there had been no Melchite patriarch in Egypt. Then Justinian forced a man named Paul into the vacant post (A.D. 541). No Copt would recognise him. But a cruel injustice was done to the national Church in transferring its revenues to the Melchite patriarch, who enjoyed them in his sinecure office, while the patriarch who was actually working at the head of the Church in Egypt was left dependent on the freewill offerings of his people. It was the same with the clergy under him. The ecclesiastical endowments and official revenues were confiscated for the little handful of Melchites. The situation is parallel to that of the United Free Church in Scotland in our own day; and that without any parliament to secure a tolerable equity. Thus the Coptic Church was not only anathematised by the orthodox Church; it was disestablished and disendowed by the State. Yet it was not crushed; nor did the small favoured community gain anything but the sordid profit of revenue by the unfair transaction. With all its endowments it never flourished, never grew. It has remained to this day a phantom Church with offices, but without functions, and in all respects an alien in the land on which it was forced many centuries ago. After the Mohammedan invasion, this Melchite organisation lost its privileges and its dues.

Meanwhile the real Church of Egypt became more national. The liturgies were now translated into the Coptic language. Early in the reign of the Emperor Maurice

(A.D. 582) there was a revolt in North Egypt, headed by three brothers—Abaskiron, Mena, and James—against the blue, or imperialist party, which for a time succeeded in wresting almost the whole of the Delta from the government. Other revolts followed. How plainly we can see in this seething discontent the undermining of the Byzantine power in Egypt. It fell for a time under the Persian invasion, which could not have been altogether unwelcome to the Copts. It was temporarily restored by the victories of that great military genius, the Emperor Heraclius. But the situation was such that the empire could not expect to find loyal defence in Egypt against the dread Mohammedan invasion, when the Arab army was on the wing like a swarm of locusts. And yet defence now meant nothing less than protection of Christendom from imminent total ruin.

CHAPTER II

THE PERSIAN AND ARAB CONQUESTS

(*a*) The Arabian authors previously named : *Patrologia Orientalis*, i. 4, Peter I. to Benjamin I., Arabic text and Eng. trans.; Theophanes, *Chronographia*; John of Nikiou, *Chronicle*, French trans.; Malan, *Documents of the Coptic Church*, especially Makrizi, *Hist. of Copts*; Renaudot, *Historia Patriarcharum Alexandrinorum Jacobitarum* (18th cent.).

(*b*) Gibbon, chaps. xlvii. and li.; Neale, *Patriarchate of Alexandria*; Mrs. Butcher, *History of the Church in Egypt*, 1897; Butler, *Arab Conquest of Egypt*, 1902; Lane Poole, *Hist. of Egypt in the Middle Ages*, 1907.

THE position of the Copts at the time of the Persian and Arab conquests of Egypt is without parallel in history. Two successive invasions swept over their country with but a short interval between them. This interval witnessed the brilliant exploits of Heraclius, who rescued the Byzantine Empire when it seemed likely to break down utterly and finally, and gave it a new lease of life, though not any approach to its former splendour. Now the question is, What was the attitude of the Copts during these three kaleidoscopic changes of the map of Empire? They were the persecuted native Christians of Egypt who had been robbed of their ecclesiastical revenues and finest churches, and who saw the alien Greek Melchites, themselves but the shadow of a church, enjoying these ancient endowments and possessions. They could have felt no sense of loyalty towards their great oppressor, the Byzantine government. Nevertheless it is certain that they did not help or encourage the Persian invaders. This is proved by the cruel treatment they received. There were no

less than six hundred monasteries in the neighbourhood of Alexandria.[1] These monasteries were walled and fortified, and the inmates endeavoured to hold out against the Persians. They were all besieged, captured, and destroyed; and the monks were put to the sword, with great slaughter. The same cruel warfare was carried up the Nile as far as Syene, and many monks were slain all along the line of conquest. The Persian King Chosroes allowed Andronicus, the Coptic patriarch, to remain in Alexandria as he had allowed the patriarch Modestus to remain at Jerusalem. No doubt he had reasons of state for these conspicuous acts of leniency. It was well to mark the difference between the national patriarchs and the Byzantine officials.

On the other hand, the Copts were less inclined to join the enemies of the Byzantine Empire just now than at any other time. The Emperor Phocus had made himself hated by all his subjects—Greeks as well as Egyptians and Syrians. Accordingly, when Heraclius led the revolt against the brutal tyrant, the whole empire had been ready to rally to the standard of the great general and assist him in a course of ambition which promised to make for the common weal. After that the Copts were not likely to side with the enemies of the man whom they had helped to set on the throne. The notion that they had done so is a pure fabrication of their Melchite calumniators. Their own grievous sufferings from the sword should have saved them from this false charge.

After Heraclius had repelled the Persian invasion, he was still regarded in a more friendly way by the Copts than had been the case with other Byzantine emperors; and at first he took some pains to cultivate pleasant relations with them. He did not go so far as to refuse to appoint a Melchite patriarch. That would have been to give mortal offence to his Greek subjects all over the empire.

[1] "Six hundred glorious monasteries like dove-cotes," says the ancient writer of the "History of the Coptic Patriarchs of Alexandria," in *Patrologia Orientalis*, tome i. fasc. 4, p. 465.

But he was careful to select for the office a man whose life and character were in high repute even among the national Christians. This was John, who came to be surnamed "the Almoner." The immensity of his charities is some evidence of the wealth of the sinecure post that he held as nominal patriarch of Alexandria, and it may help to explain the bitterness felt by the impoverished national Church that had been robbed in order to endow this alien and generally useless office. The Church had a large share in the enormous grain trade which passed between Alexandria and Constantinople, and all the profit of this now went into the coffers of the Melchite patriarch. John did the best thing that seemed possible for him under the circumstances. He did not renounce the wealth which only came to him in his official capacity, and of which he regarded himself as a trustee; but he gave it away with more than princely generosity. He distributed daily relief among 7,500 poor people in Alexandria. After the sack of Jerusalem by the Persians, he sent to that city of many woes gifts of money, food, and clothing, with a modest letter in which he said, "Pardon me that I can send nothing worthy the temples of Christ. Would that I could come myself and work with my own hands at the Church of the Resurrection."

Here we may see one good result of the Persian invasion. It was the indirect means of drawing the Syrian and Egyptian Churches together in bonds of real Christian sympathy. John the Almoner was treading in the footsteps of St. Paul when he sent aid to the "brethren at Jerusalem." In the autumn of the year 615, while John's caravans were crossing the desert, the Jacobite patriarch of Antioch, Athanasius, paid a visit to Anastasias, the Coptic patriarch of Alexandria, meeting him at the Ennanton Monastery on the seacoast west of Alexandria, where some Syrian monks were already staying for a time in order to revise the Syriac Bible by collation with the Greek text, while others had come as refugees from the Persian invasion. This meeting brought about a result which the

Melchite John's charities could not effect. It issued in a union between the Syrian and the Coptic Churches, both of which were of the Monophysite creed.

The deplorable surprise of the reign of Heraclius appeared only too soon. The man who had the genius to save the empire had not the common sense to govern it. Heraclius was one of the greatest generals the world has ever seen; he proved to be one of the most incompetent, blundering rulers who ever mismanaged a great empire. We do not expect a soldier to be a theologian, and Heraclius may be forgiven for leaving the subtleties of Christology to his professional adviser, Sergius, the patriarch of Constantinople. But he cannot be excused for the inconsiderate way in which he forced what he intended to be an olive branch on to the people whom he desired to reconcile with orthodoxy. He did not even consult Benjamin, the patriarch of the national Church of Egypt at the time. Cyrus, his nominee for the Melchite patriarchate of Alexandria (in the year 630), was the very worst man to select as a conciliator. Cyrus took his appointment as an excuse for forcing his alien Melchite authority on the national Church of Egypt. His cruel policy was anticipated from the first. Benjamin the Coptic patriarch fled into hiding directly Cyrus landed (A.D. 631). He knew what this mission meant. The Coptic monks were now worse off than the British monks of Bangor, when Augustine, less than thirty years before this very time, had approached with orders to compel them to submit to Rome. They fled in all directions. So did many of the clergy of the national Church. All were seized with terror. And their fears were justified. Those who resisted Cyrus were severely dealt with—imprisoned, tortured, killed. Many, however, submitted, even among the bishops. There are few more pitiable passages in the history of the Church than this. Here we have a brief interlude between one non-Christian invasion and another—between the pagan Persian and the Mohammedan Arab invasion. During this short interval a Christian power is ruling in Egypt.

Yet it proves to be a time of misery for the national Church. The dominant party of Christians spend it in brutally persecuting their fellow-Christians.

Cyrus's violent measures went on for ten years. After seven or eight years of this persecution, Heraclius made his last attempt at securing the peace of the Church by the issue of the *Ecthesis*,[1] advocating the newly invented Monothelete idea. It is probable that outside Alexandria the monks never heard of the existence of this document. No extant Coptic writing betrays any knowledge of it. To the Copts their old friend Heraclius appeared to have been changed into a persecutor, trying to force them back to the hated Chalcedonian heresy. This was a double mistake. The *Ecthesis* was a departure from Chalcedon, and as such was destined ultimately to be anathematised by an œcumenical council, and the emperor was no persecutor, but a peacemaker—in intention. Meanwhile, from the first Cyrus was exceeding his master's orders and directly contradicting the spirit of them. In being vested with supreme authority over Egypt he was able to oppress the Copts, who do not seem to have dreamed of going behind him to appeal to Heraclius, as though they had had any doubt of his approval of Cyrus. It must be admitted that although his original intention had been pacific, Heraclius, like Constantine three centuries earlier, was driven by force of circumstances into at least an acquiescence in persecution. This is the inevitable destiny of the autocrat who desires to force comprehension by the mutual reconciliation of all differences on his reluctant subjects. Heraclius must have known of Cyrus's persecution. Unless he was too weak to interfere, he must have acquiesced in it. No doubt in the latter part of the ten cruel years he was bitterly disappointed with his pet device for settling ecclesiastical differences. His *Ecthesis* was a last attempt at conciliation, and, in spite of some temporary success, in the end it proved to be a failure, partly because it was entrusted to the wrong hands.

[1] See p. 129.

The sequel to Heraclius's magnificent feat in hurling back the Persians from Egypt and Syria and re-establishing the crumbling power of the Byzantine Empire is one of the greatest disappointments in history. For the moment it looked as though the glorious days of Constantine or Theodosius were returning. Then rose the thunder-cloud from the Arabian desert, and the hosts of Islam swept over province after province, till at length, after centuries of Titanic wrestling, the remnant of the Roman Empire in the East was finally subdued, and the Crescent gleamed on the central dome of St. Sophia, there to remain till the present day.

Now we have to see the relation of this triumphant march of Islam in its early days to the Copts and their Church. Mohammed never entered Egypt. The prophet died in the year 632. It was seven years later that the Moslems invaded Egypt. Omar was then caliph. A letter he had despatched to Amr', who was on the way to Egypt, recalling the general to Medina, had reached its destination, but Amr' did not open it, and marched on in spite of what he suspected to be its orders. His subsequent victories condoned the act of insubordination. There can be no doubt that these victories were won partly by aid rendered in Egypt itself. But there is some confusion in reference to the source and manner of this assistance. It has been attributed to the Copts. If that were correct, we could hardly regard them as traitors, since they were already the subjects of a foreign master in the Byzantine emperor, who represented the alien Church that had appropriated their ecclesiastical property. It was but a question of a change of masters. Still, the Byzantine Empire, though viewed by the Copts as heretical in its acceptance of the decrees of Chalcedon, was a Christian power, and the admission of the Moslem conqueror was an encouragement to Islam as a rival religion which threatened to stamp out the faith of Christ. The persecution of Christians by their fellow-Christians is never more convincingly futile as a defence of the faith than when it

drives the victims into the arms of the infidel. But it is not proved against the Copts that they rendered any practical assistance to the Arab invaders. They were crushed and scattered by the Melchite persecution that had followed the issue of the *Ecthesis* and its enforcement by Cyrus. Benjamin their patriarch was in exile; his flock was in no condition to seriously influence public affairs. The action that was taken to smooth the way for the invader came from another source, and that a source the circumstances of which made it far more treasonable in character. A mysterious personage, known to the Arab writers as "the Mukaukas," described as "the chief ruler of Egypt," has been accused as the chief traitor to Christianity at this juncture. Mr. Stanley Lane Poole suggests that the mystery of his personality may be explained on the hypothesis that two distinct persons are involved under the same name. He accepts the view that the title Mukaukas, as a form of a Greek word meaning "most glorious,"[1] appears to have been used for any Byzantine official. Now, in the year 628, a certain Egyptian official of the empire named George, and bearing this title, sent two slave girls, a white mule, and a pot of Benha honey as presents to Mohammed, and one of the slave girls, known as "Mary the Copt," became a concubine of the prophet. Twelve years later we meet a Byzantine official with the same name and title as Mohammed's friendly Mukaukas; possibly, however, it is suggested, he is not the same man, but perhaps a son. This George rendered the Arabs some assistance in taking Misr. In return he got these terms—(1) A moderate poll tax for the Christians, consisting of two dinars (about £1, 1s. 0d.) per head, a land tax, and the requirement of giving three days' hospitality to soldiers. (2) No peace with the Romans till they were all made slaves. (3) A promise that when George died he should be buried in the church of St. John at Alexandria.

If this view were adopted, we could not reckon the Mukaukas to be a very important person, and the difficulty

[1] Μεγαυχής.

would be to account for so much fuss being made about him and his treachery. But another theory is advocated by Mr. Butler, which, if it is adopted, will throw a very different light on the story. This is that the official with the barbarous name in the Arab chronicles is no one else than the well-known Cyrus, the Melchite patriarch of Alexandria. So astounding a conception is enough to take away our breath when it comes upon us for the first time. The reader must be referred to Mr. Butler's exhaustive examination of the whole case for an adequate appreciation of the evidence, which is cumulative.[1] The theory appears to have been originated by the Portuguese scholar Pereira. It starts from a statement of Severus of Ushmunaim, that "Cyrus was appointed by Heraclius after the recovery of Egypt from the Persians to be both *patriarch and governor of Alexandria*.[2] This is very significant. It points to a double office, and suggests the idea that the man who was at the same time at the head both of the civil and of the ecclesiastical establishments at Alexandria could really dominate Egypt. We can well understand the Arabian view of him. Then it is suggested that the strange title Mukaukas, that has given rise to so many conjectures, is derived from the word *kaukasios*,[3] and indicates Cyrus, who came from Phasis in the Caucasus as a native of that district.[4] It is certain that Cyrus entered into early negotiations with the Mohammedan General Amr', promising him an annual tribute and the emperor's daughter Eudocia for his harem if he would withdraw his troops. Heraclius was in a rage when he heard of his official's daring proposal, and summoned him to Constantinople,

[1] *The Arab Conquest of Egypt*, Appendix C.

[2] See also *Patrologia Orientalis*, tome i. fasc. 4, "Hist. of Pat.": "When Heraclius obtained possession of the land, he appointed governors in every place, and he sent a governor to the land of Egypt named Cyrus, to be *prefect* and patriarch at the same time" (p. 489).

[3] καυκάσιος.

[4] Other suggested derivations are from καύκον, a supposed copper coin, and καυκίον, a little bowl; or perhaps the term is a dark allusion to vicious practices.

where we should have expected his immediate execution. But the terror of the Arabian invasion was so great that the emperor sent Cyrus back to arrange terms. When the Mukaukas was at Babylon, the ancient Coptic capital, he had carried on secret negotiations for surrender. But his policy had then been frustrated. Alexandria, open to the sea and strongly fortified by land, should have stood a long siege. It was surrendered without a blow.[1] This apparently needless action of the defenders is attributed to the treachery of the Mukaukas. It may have been owing to a wise policy for the protection of the city, its treasures, and its citizens. Subsequently Alexandria was recovered by the Byzantine; and after that the Arabs took it by assault. It is difficult to see what Cyrus had to gain by treachery. But there is no doubt that he negotiated terms of surrender with the Arabs. The fact is confirmed by John of Nikiou, who states, however, that Cyrus was not alone in desiring peace, the inhabitants generally also wishing for it.[2] On the other hand, he states that Amr' fought for twelve years against the Christians of North Egypt before he succeeded in conquering that province—the very district where Cyrus had most influence.[3] When Alexandria was taken the stern Amr' forbade pillage.

The famous story of the destruction of the library is now discredited. According to the statement of Abū-l-Farág, Amr' consulted Omar as to what he should do with the books, and the caliph replied, "If these writings of the Greeks agree with the book of God, they are useless and need not be preserved; if they disagree, they are pernicious and ought to be destroyed." So, we are told, they were distributed among the 4,000 baths of the city, and even then it took six months to burn them all. Gibbon follows Renaudot in throwing doubt on this picturesque story, and later critics have confirmed their scepticism. It is not to be met with

[1] John of Nikiou, *Chronicle*, cxvii. [2] *Ibid.* cxx.
[3] *Ibid.* cxv.

till the thirteenth century, six hundred years later.[1] Besides, it is in itself unlikely. It is very doubtful whether there was a library of any considerable size in Alexandria at the time. Ptolemy's famous library appears to have been destroyed by Cæsar. A few years later the library of the kings of Pergamum was lodged at the Serapeum; but when the Serapeum was destroyed by the mob in the fourth century, this library must have been burnt or scattered. Then John Philoponus, who, according to the late Arab story, had asked Amr' for the books, could not have been living in the year 642, because he is known to have been writing more than a century before this date. Moreover, the Arabs did not enter Alexandria for eleven months after the city had capitulated, and during all that time the inhabitants were free to carry off their treasures. When the entry was made, Amr' prohibited destruction of property. Lastly, there is the inherent improbability—as Mr. Butler points out—that books, many of them of parchment, would be used for lighting 4,000 bath fires. It would have paid the bathmen better to have sold them to scholars, many of whom would have come forward as eager purchasers. Putting all these facts together—the destruction of Ptolemy's library by the Romans in the first century B.C.; the destruction of the Serapeum, which contained the library from Pergamum in the third century A.D.; the evident impossibility of that part of the story that introduces the name of Philoponus; the ample opportunity for saving the books given to the Alexandrians; Amr's rigorous prohibition of deeds of violence; and the general improbability of the whole narrative—we have ample reasons for rejecting the tradition as not true.

After the Arab conquest of Egypt, the centre of government was removed from Alexandria to Fustât ("the tent"), near what is now known as "Old Cairo." This place was more easily reached from Medina and at the same time out of the Byzantine influences of Alexandria. Here the government was carried on for two hundred and fifty years.

[1] In 'Abd-el-Latîf and Abû-l-Farág.

As regards the two parties of Christians, the tables were turned. The orthodox, being the party of the Byzantine Empire, were in disfavour, and they were robbed of their swollen possessions, some part of which reverted to its rightful owners, the Copts. At first these people were leniently treated. Amr' received a deputation of monks begging for a charter of rights and the restoration of their patriarch Benjamin after an exile of thirteen years.[1] In reply he graciously granted the charter and invited the patriarch to return. His decree ran as follows: "Let every place, wherein Benjamin the patriarch of the Coptic Christians may be, possess full security, peace and trust from God: let him come with safety and fearlessness, and freely administer the affairs of his Church and people."[2] A little later the Copts were allowed to build a church behind the bridge at Fustât. Altogether the national Church in Egypt was at first much freer and happier under the rule of the unbeliever than it had been under that of the orthodox emperor. Benjamin was now able to conduct a thorough visitation of his churches unmolested. On the other hand, Amr' would allow no retaliation on the Melchites. The two Churches were to live together side by side. For the time being there was peace in Egypt. This is one of the few interludes between the many severe persecutions and the long weary ages of ill-treatment to which the Christian inhabitants have been subject.

Nevertheless, it is only by comparison with the more harsh government of later times that we can regard this early Arab period as pacific and lenient. In England or America we should think the tyranny of Islam even at its best simply intolerable. In accordance with the universal

[1] John of Nikiou, cxxi.

[2] Severus in Renaudot, pp. 163, 164. In the "Hist. of the Patriarchs" the decree is given as follows: "Amr' wrote to the provinces of Egypt—'There is protection and security for the place where Benjamin the patriarch of the Coptic Christians is, and peace from the governor. Therefore let him come forth secure and tranquil, and administer the affairs of his Church and the government of his nation;'" *Patrologia Orientalis*, tome i. fasc. 4, pp. 495, 496.

rule—the choice being Islam, tribute, or the sword—the Christians were heavily taxed, while the Mohammedans paid no taxes. Thus they, together with the Jews, bore all the financial burden of the State, paid the expenses of the government and the army, and supported the luxuries of the harems. Over and above this, their lives were spared and their freedom of worship was allowed only on the following conditions:—

1. The Koran must not be reviled nor copies of it burnt.
2. The Prophet must not be spoken of disrespectfully.
3. Islam must not be condemned or reviled.
4. No Christian may marry a Mohammedan woman.
5. No attempt may be made to convert or injure a Mohammedan.
6. The enemies of Islam are not to be assisted.

To these general regulations there were added certain humiliating restrictions, as that houses of the Christians must not overtop houses of Mohammedans; the ringing of church bells must not be forced on the ears of Mohammedans; crosses must not be displayed in public; Christians must not ride on thoroughbred horses; certain burial ordinances must be observed, etc.

Gradually the Christians were made to feel that, though within the limits imposed upon them they could enjoy a considerable measure of personal liberty, they were in a state of social bondage. The extraordinary democratic nature of Islam gave to Egyptian converts equal privileges with the invaders from Arabia, except in some military matters. Accordingly, it was not like the case of the invasion of England by William the Conqueror, after which the Normans as conquerors lorded it over the defeated English. In Egypt the native people could share the privileges of the victorious Arabs if they would adopt the religion of their masters.

Viewed from a distance and in the abstract, this policy may appear to be large-minded, noble, generous. Religion is exalted above race, and the victor is willing to share the spoils of war with the vanquished, on conditions that

do not make for his own material advantage. Thus, though a religion of the sword, Islam maintains its character as essentially, by its creed and constitution, a missionary religion. On the other hand, this very characteristic of the Mohammedan government added to its pressure of tyranny on those people who adhered to another faith. It was all the worse for the Christian Copt to see his fellow-Egyptian passing over to the rival faith and so increasing the forces of the oppressor. For an oppressor the Mussulman ruler must be, as regards the Christians, even when his methods are the mildest. Bribery was resorted to as an additional means of detaching the weak from the Church and winning them to Islam. If these things were done in the green tree, what was to be expected in the dry? Although the Arab rule in Egypt began so moderately that the Copts were ready to rejoice in it for the relief it afforded from the Melchite tyranny, they were soon to have reasons for repenting of the welcome they had given it. It was not long before their disadvantages were increased, and from time to time in the subsequent centuries they were harassed with savage outbreaks of persecution. The Christians never enjoy full liberty under Islam; they are always treated as inferiors, if not as outlaws; and they are often subject to great cruelty without hope of redress. Egypt has proved to be no exception to this melancholy generalisation.

CHAPTER III

THE COPTS UNDER THE CALIPHATE

(*a*) The Arabian authors; John of Nikiou, *Chronicle*; Makrizi; Eutychius; Amelineau, *Étude sur le Christianisme au Égypte au Septième Siècle* (containing translation of Life of Abbot Pisentius); Renaudot, *Historia Patriarcharum Alexandrinorum*; Le Quien, *Oriens Christianus*, 1741; Abu Salik, *The Churches and Monasteries of Eyypt* (died A.D. 900; Eng. trans. 1895).

(*b*) Gibbon, chap. li.; Neale, *Patriarchate of Alexandria*, vol. ii.; Mrs. Butcher, *History of the Church in Egypt*, 1897; Lane Poole, *Hist. of Egypt in the Middle Ages*, 1907.

THE Coptic monks of this period, first harried by the Persians, next persecuted by the Melchites, and then oppressed by the Arabs, were now at their highest stage of culture. The mission of scholars from Syria to an Egyptian monastery for the revision of their own Scriptures is one sign of this fact. It seems clear that the Melchites studied the Greek classics as well as the Church Fathers. This is shown by classical allusions in their writings. How far these studies were shared by the Copts, however, is not quite evident. But under the liberal rule of John the Almoner there was more friendly communication between the two churches than at any other time either before or after. Sophronius, the orthodox opponent of the *Ecthesis*, came from Alexandria, and he composed an elegy on the Holy Places in Anacreontic verse,—but of course he was a Melchite. A friend of John the Almoner and Sophronius, John Moschus, gives an account of his visits to Egyptian monasteries in a famous book, entitled *Spiritual Pastures*.[1]

[1] Λειμὼν πνευματικός.

These two men afford considerable information regarding the manners and customs of the churches and monasteries of Egypt in their day, and show how full of intellectual life they were. For instance, in his account of a monk whom he calls "Cosmas the Student," John Moschus says, "We shall write nothing from hearsay—only what we have seen with our own eyes. He was a simple-minded man, abstemious and clean living: he was easy tempered and sociable, given to hospitality, a friend of the poor. He rendered us the very greatest service, not only by his speculation and his teaching, but because he possessed the finest private library in Alexandria, and freely lent his books to all readers. He was very poor, and the whole of his house, which was full of books, contained no furniture but a bed and a table. His library was open to all comers. Every reader could ask for the book he wanted and there read it. Day by day I visited Cosmas, and it is a mere fact that I never once entered his house without finding him engaged either in reading or in writing against the Jews. He was very reluctant to leave his library, so that he often sent me out to argue with some of the Jews from the manuscript he had written." Cosmos told John that he had lived there for thirty-three years. When asked what he had learnt during all this long time of study, he answered that the three principal things were "not to laugh, not to swear, and not to lie."[1]

The monks were diligent students and copyists of books. Coptic illuminated manuscripts, some of which are dated as early as this period, are reckoned as among the treasures of art on their own account, and also because their decorative work set an example for the mediæval monks. The church architecture of the Copts had attained to real splendour, and was developing germs of an originality that was destined to have a remarkable effect on Saracenic and Gothic building. Instead of the uniform classic capital, a new foliation now appeared. Mosaic work in brilliant coloured glass, which we think of as

[1] John Moschus, quoted by Butler, *Arab Conquest of Egypt*, pp. 99, 100.

essentially Byzantine, was also developed by the Copts. About this time also they began to produce the highly wrought marble carving known as *Opus Alexandrinum*. Mr. Lethaby has recently pointed out the remarkable resemblance between the Coptic textiles of the fifth and sixth centuries, in which knotted and plaited work is used freely, and old Saxon ornamentation. Not only may Coptic vestments devised in this style have found their way to Britain, but the flight of the monks, first before the Persians and later before the Arabs, may have resulted in some of them coming themselves as far west. Mr. Lethaby remarks: "Such a theory would account for a sudden appearance of this type over a wide field. The fact that the earliest examples of Arabic silks made in Egypt (seventh and eighth centuries) are ornamented with bands of braided patterns which are obviously a continuation of the Coptic designs, goes to show how powerful the tradition was. The time of Theodore, the eastern Archbishop of Canterbury (669–690), would be particularly favourable for the migration of monks and artists from the Orient. Only a few years after the death of Theodore, the Lindisfarne book was written and decorated, and about the same time knot-work first appears in Italian stone carving."[1]

At the later period when Saracenic architecture began to develop as a new order astounding the world with its delicate beauty, the actual work was primarily dependent on Greek and Coptic designing and handicraft. Mosques were planned by Greek architects, and their fine decorative work executed by Coptic craftsmen. The Arabs were warriors and rulers; they were not builders and artists. Their natural home was the desert tent, and when they indulged in the luxury of cities they were dependent on the skill of the conquered peoples whom they forced into their service. At first pillars were torn from Christian churches to be used in the construction of Moslem mosques.

[1] *The Origin of Knotted Ornamentation*, "Burlington Magazine," January 1907, with references to *Le Monastere . . . de Baûit*, "Mémoires d'Archéologie," etc., vol. xii., Cairo, 1906.

When the Mohammedans began to make the shafts of pillars, they crowned them with stolen Christian capitals, and when they had entirely new work done this was executed by men of the Christian stock, although in many cases these men conformed to Islam. All along North Africa and even in Spain the Arabesque designs are largely of Coptic and almost entirely of Christian origin. Being adopted by Mohammedans, they are adapted to the principles of the Koran. The Alhambra may have reminiscences of the Bedouin tent in its domestic arrangements, but its architectural style is a direct descendant and development of the Alexandrian.

Cyrus died soon after the Arab conquest of Egypt. He was nominally succeeded by a Melchite patriarch named Peter, who found it convenient to retire to Constantinople, where he persuaded the Emperor Constans to substitute the *Type* for the *Ecthesis*.[1] After his death there was no Melchite patriarch of Alexandria for more than seventy years (A.D. 654–727). Such priests of the orthodox Church as still came to minister to its few Greek adherents in Egypt then obtained their ordination in Syria. Meanwhile the national Church, which had enjoyed a measure of favour under Amr', was not long in discovering the real significance of the rule of Islam. Benjamin was succeeded in the patriarchate by Agatho (A.D. 659), who had to confine himself in his own house for a time to escape from the demands of a priest of the orthodox communion named Theodosius. This man had succeeded in obtaining from the Caliph Yezid a grant of contributions from the Coptic patriarchate. When Agatho died, Theodosius boldly took possession of the patriarch's residence and affixed his seal to all that it contained. This was going too far. Abdel-Aziz, the governor of Egypt, interfered, and the impudent priest was forced to beat a hasty retreat. The new Coptic patriarch was John Semnudæus, who took advantage of the temporary favour of the government to advance the interests of the Copts.

[1] See p. 129.

This was perhaps the most flourishing time of the Coptic Church. The Mohammedan government was friendly, the Melchites were unable to annoy, and the mills and oil presses of the patriarchate were bringing in good revenue, which the patriarch used to relieve distress throughout the whole country during a time of famine. So John Semnudæus was a second Joseph. But he was not permitted to end his days in peace. John attempted to act as mediator between the Emperor of Ethiopia and the King of Nubia, who were at war. Abdel-Aziz was induced to treat this action as a political intrigue for the overthrow of the power of Islam, and he condemned the patriarch to be beheaded. Happily the governor was persuaded to spare John's life, and he contented himself with ending the incident by ordering certain sentences affirming the Mussulman faith to be written on the church doors.[1]

Something more nearly approaching real persecution was practised by the emir's eldest son, Asabah, who was influenced by an apostate Copt named Benjamin. He laid a capitation tax of a gold piece on every monk and a tax of a thousand pieces of gold on every bishop, and he forbade anybody for the future to take monastic vows. The father and the son died near the same time; but this did not mend matters. The Caliph Abdel-Melech appointed his son Abdallah to be governor of Egypt (A.D. 705). He proved to be a savage tyrant after the fashion of one of the monsters of cruelty in the *Arabian Nights*. For instance, he would order a guest's head to be taken off while sitting with him at table. When the patriarch Alexander ventured to enter the palace to do homage to the new emir, Abdallah flung him into prison and demanded 3,000 pieces of gold as the price of his freedom. This governor of a province of the Mussulman Empire was acting just like a brigand from the mountains. The patriarch had no means for raising his ransom till George his deacon obtained leave for his liberation to

[1] Neale calls this the "First Persecution under Abdel-Aziz."

go round the towns and villages collecting the money, promising to bring him back at the end of two months. From being the distributor of bounty to the poor of the land the patriarch of Egypt was now reduced to the humiliating necessity of tramping from place to place among his flock in order to save his life and liberty. By this means the money was obtained. But that did not satisfy the rapacious emir. He had churches despoiled of their treasures, and Christians who had not registered in his census—which was only an expedient for extortion—branded on their forehead or hands. At last he pressed his extortions by torture. This provoked a rising in Upper Egypt, which was quickly quelled, with the inevitable result that the persecution became more severe.

On the death of the Caliph Abdel-Melech, and the succession of his son Walid, Abdallah was superseded by Korah-ben-Serik as Emir of Egypt. For the unhappy Christians every change was only a change for the worse. When Alexander presented himself before Korah to offer the expected homage of the patriarch to the governor, he was met with the same demand that Abdallah had made, and showing he had no means of paying, set off to Upper Egypt to collect the money. After two years' wandering he was only able to obtain a third of the amount required. The emir was suspicious, and believing a report that Alexander had a private mint, sent for it to his residence, where, since no trace of it could be found, the patriarch and his attendants were savagely scourged. The persecution was continued under the next emir, Amasa, with much cruelty. The repeated exactions of money, which were among its chief characteristics, give it a wretchedly sordid appearance. The motive was so evidently selfish greed rather than high policy of state.

At length the Melchites ventured in electing a patriarch to the post that had been vacant so long, and their choice fell on a needle-maker, Cosmas, who could neither read nor write, but who justified their wisdom in appointing him by his able management of a peculiarly difficult position. He

took a journey to Damascus and there had an audience with the caliph, whom he succeeded in convincing that he was in the true line of the ancient patriarchate of Alexandria, and so got several of the churches taken from the Copts and given up to him. It was a most unhappy revival of the old intrusion of the Greek Church in Egypt, and one more trouble for the much afflicted native Church. After this the Copts had great difficulty in electing a patriarch for their own communion. When they had succeeded in coming to an agreement on Chail I., the governor loaded them with fresh money exactions, in order to pay which some sold their cattle, and some even their children. Many bishops fled and hid in the monasteries.

In the year 748 a new governor, Hassan, was appointed, and for a time he was friendly towards the Christians. It is pitiable to see that one consequence was that both parties —the Melchites and the Copts—appealed to the government in a dispute about the possession of a church—St. Mennas in the Mareotis. This appears to be the first case in which two bodies of Christians have brought their quarrel into a Mohammedan court of law. The emir gave his decision in favour of the national Church. The glint of favour was but transient. A little later the emir threw Chail into a dungeon, together with three hundred Christians of both sexes. The patriarch was only liberated in order to undertake the weary work of collecting money for their ransom in Upper Egypt.

The emir became so tyrannical that he drove the Copts in Upper Egypt to another rebellion. Both the patriarchs, Cosmas the Melchite and Chail the Copt, were taken prisoners; the former was let off on payment of a ransom, and the latter was employed to use his influence with his flock in bringing them to submission. The war was complicated by the quarrels now going on among the Mohammedans, and the Christians joined the faction of the Abbasidæ. Their success brought immediate relief to the Church.

A curious sidelight is thrown on the status of the

Coptic Christians in the eighth century by the Mohammedan historian Makrizi. Under the favour of the new line of caliphs and their emirs in Egypt, they now entered on a temporary era of prosperity, which was viewed with jealousy by their Mussulman fellow-subjects. According to Makrizi, they assumed a proud bearing and flaunting airs. "It came to this," he says, "that one of the Christian secretaries passed before the Mosque el Azher in el Kahira (Cairo) riding in boots with spurs, and white bands round his head after the fashion of Alexandria, with footmen going before him to drive away the people lest they should throng him, and behind him a number of slaves in costly apparel on prancing steeds. A lot of Mussulmans then present ill-brooked this; so they rose up against him," etc.[1] The result was a disturbance in which the proud Copt was roughly handled. This passage is very significant. In the first place it indicates the prosperity of the Copts who had succeeded in making their way into official positions. Then, as in the present day, it would seem that their special aptitude for clerkships and secretaryships gave them an advantage over the Arabs in regard to these offices. The pride of a member of a persecuted community during a short interval of immunity may seem surprising. But such a man as we see here is lifted out of the common rut by his official rank. The reference to Alexandria is peculiarly interesting. Cairo was a Mohammedan city from its foundation; but Alexandria was the old Christian capital. Alexandrian manners would seem to have retained a flavour of the old Roman imperial temper. But anything of the kind was certainly out of place in Cairo under a Mussulman emir. We are not surprised to learn that Christians who made any assumption of self-importance were roughly treated by the Cairene mob. There were times when it was not safe for any Christians to show themselves in the streets, when they were compelled to stay indoors for their lives. Makrizi goes on to tell how after this the Christians were forbidden to enter the public service even if they embraced Islam,

[1] Malan, pp. 106 ff.

and ordered to attend five prayers and the Friday assembly at the mosques and other places of gathering for prayer.[1]

In the course of the civil war that broke out after the death of the famous Caliph Aaron-al-Raschid, the Spanish Arabs of the house of the Ommiadæ, which had been superseded by the Abbasidæ, invaded Egypt and made slaves of their prisoners of war. Mark the Coptic patriarch offered to buy all these slaves, and his offer was gladly welcomed, so that 6,000 prisoners were liberated in this way.[2] Alexandria was captured, but while the besiegers were resting off their guard the Arabs rose and commenced an indiscriminate slaughter of Jews and Christians as well as Spanish troops. Mark escaped to the desert, where he remained in hiding for five years.

Much of the Coptic history of this period consists of little else than stories of the successive patriarchs, few of whom seem to have been men of any power or importance. The patriarch Jacob, who was at the head of the Coptic Church early in the ninth century, attained to some fame, which induced his brother patriarch at Antioch, Dionysius, the author of the *Chronicle from the beginning of the World to his own times*, to pay him a visit. Yucab, who became Coptic patriarch in or near the year 837,[3] consecrated bishops for the more remote parts of his diocese, especially by the borders of the Red Sea. He also cultivated an intimate friendship with the Melchite patriarch Sophronius. But though for the time being this may have softened the acerbity of sectarian animosity between the two parties, it did not lead to any steps towards bringing them together. Yucab died in the year 850, and was succeeded by Chail, the second Coptic patriarch of that name. Almost immediately after this the peace which the Church had enjoyed, broken only by temporary outbreaks, for nearly

[1] Malan, p. 108.

[2] Neale, who always writes as a strong partisan of the Melchites, remarks on this noble deed, "Heresy probably thus reaped a harvest of converts," *Patriarchate of Alexandria*, vol. ii. p. 139.

[3] According to Makrizi, in 842.

fifty years, came to an end, and the old trouble caused by the rapacity of the emirs was vexing it again. The patriarch even had to sell the sacred vessels of his church to meet the demands of the civil governor. The Caliph Mutawekkil now lays down many vexatious regulations for the Christians. They are to wear honey-coloured cloth, or a distinguishing patch on their garments; the men are to have a girdle after the style of women; they are to put up a wooden image of a devil, an ape, or a dog over their doors; no crosses may be shown; neither may they have processions through the streets with lights; they may not ride on horses; nothing must be set up on their graves to mark them. Still annoying and insulting as all this is, it cannot be compared with the violent persecutions of earlier and of later periods. After the year 856 most of the emirs were Turks, since men of this race were now coming more and more to the front in the army and government of the caliphate, while the old vigour of the desert warriors was deserting the Arab families amid the luxury and sensuality of their life in cities. The Turkish emirs of Egypt were able men, and some of them mild and merciful rulers. During the patriarchate of Chenouda, a man of great influence in the Coptic Church, the governor Abdallah doubled or trebled the taxation of the Christians. His difficulty was with the monks, who owned no property, and he put a tax on their fruit and vegetables. Chenouda retired into seclusion for a time, but subsequently he came out and presented himself before the emir, who then came to terms with him. It was the same perpetual question of how much money could be squeezed out of the Christians which had so long disgraced the story of the emirs in Egypt. In this agreement between Abdallah and Chenouda it was settled that the Church of Alexandria should pay an annual tribute of 2,000 and the monasteries of 2,300 pieces of gold.

The greatest of the Turkish emirs was Ibn Tulun, who has left his name on a famous mosque at Cairo. This man was originally a Turkish slave. He married the

daughter of the Emir Bargug, who gave him a free hand, so that at the age of thirty-three he became really the governor of Egypt (A.D. 868). Then he began to live in kingly state. Tulun was no friend to the Christians. He ruthlessly levelled the Christian graves for a new town between Fustât and the Mokattam hills. In the year 878 he renounced allegiance to the caliph, took Damascus, captured and sacked Antioch. This was the first mutiny in Egypt since the Arab conquest. Although Tulun was a fierce and ruthless destroyer when on the warpath, he revived the power of Egypt in the East, and beautified Cairo with some of the finest work of Saracenic architecture. He died of the fatigues of his tremendous life when on his travels, in the year 884, before he was fifty years of age.

These were dark times for the Copts. The Melchite party had come into temporary favour and the national Church was under a cloud, when a deacon, maintaining that he had been wrongly treated by Chenouda, appealed to the governor Ahmed, who thereupon summoned all the Coptic bishops to his presence. Chenouda had gone into hiding, but he was discovered and dragged out. The bishops were stripped of their episcopal robes, and, clad as simple monks, led through the streets on the backs of asses without saddles amidst the jeers of the mob. The patriarch was flung into a dungeon and kept there for thirty days, in the hope that he would pay a handsome ransom, which, however, was not forthcoming. This incident ended strangely. The accusing deacon professed penitence, and Chenouda granted him absolution; but the penitent soon proved his insincerity by bringing various false accusations against Christians. When his villainy was discovered the emir had him scourged almost to death. Chenouda died in or about the year 881, after a patriarchate full of trouble and vexation. Great as was his influence among his own people, he seems to have been a weak, timorous man, unsuited to the rough times in which his lot was cast. But Egypt was not the soil to bring

forth a Hildebrand or a Thomas à Becket, and even if one of those heroes of ecclesiasticism had appeared under the rule of Islam, it is difficult to see how he could have developed his powers.

Chenouda's successor, Chail III., had as troublesome a time as that of the unhappy patriarch whom he was called to follow. His misfortunes sprang from what occurred during his visit to Xois, in the diocese of Saca, for the consecration of a new church. The service was unaccountably delayed by the absence of the bishop, till it was discovered that he was entertaining his friends at a preliminary banquet which was unduly protracted. On learning this, the indignant patriarch commenced the service. When the bishop came in and saw what was happening he flew into a rage, seized the bread of the Eucharist and flung it on the ground. The next day Chail and the other assembled bishops met and excommunicated the offender. This man then went to the Emir Tulun, and informed him that the patriarch had enough wealth to pay for his projected military expedition. Chail was summoned, and ordered to give up everything belonging to the Christian worship except the vestments. Refusing to do this, he was sent to prison and kept there for a twelvemonth. Then he was let out on the condition that he should procure 20,000 pieces of gold, one-half in a month, the rest in four months. Chail took refuge in a Melchite church, and apparently did nothing towards accomplishing his really impossible task, till it was pointed out to him that there were ten vacant bishoprics, by charging fees for the appointment to which he might raise money. By this and other disgraceful means he got a considerable amount, but not nearly half what was required. As a last resource he went to Alexandria and bargained with the clergy for their church ornaments in return for a pledge to pay the Alexandrian Church a thousand pieces of gold every year in perpetuity. Even then he had only half the huge sum demanded of him by the emir, who, however, died before taking measures to

force the wretched patriarch to make still further efforts at obtaining the rest of the money.

The practice of taking money for appointments to bishoprics invented by Chail III. was often adopted by subsequent patriarchs. The Alexandrian tribute and the exactions of the government were the excuses for a custom that the Church has always condemned as simoniacal. The money was not taken for the personal advantage of the vendors. It was requisitioned as an absolute necessity for the payment of obligatory dues. Still, the practice was owned to be a scandalous evil, and the better patriarchs endeavoured to break it off. Chail himself ended his days as a penitent mourning for his double offence of violating the canons and alienating the property of the Church.

The condition of Egypt under the Mohammedan rule was now going from bad to worse. The caliphs endeavoured to retain their power over it by a frequent change of emirs, so that no one governor should have time to establish himself in independence. Emirs would bribe the caliphs for appointment and reappointment, and, of course, wring the money for this backshish from their miserable subjects, the Christians always being the greatest sufferers. But, on the occasion of one of these emirs imposing a new tribute on bishops and monks, a deputation of Christians went to Bagdad to represent to the caliph the intolerable condition of affairs, and succeeded in obtaining an order that nothing beyond the usual tax should be exacted from them. While they were being bled the Christians were also being starved. One emir ordered that neither Christians nor Jews should be employed in any other way than as physicians and tradesmen.

Eutychius, commonly known as Said, the chronicler of this period of Coptic history, was a Melchite patriarch early in the ninth century. He was a man of some culture, who had studied and practised medicine and written a treatise on that subject. He was also the author of a disputation between a Christian and a heretic, and a

work on the history of Sicily after the invasion. But his best known work is his annals of Alexandrian history, entitled *Contexture of Gems*, a dreary book revealing a credulous mind on the part of its author. During Said's patriarchate the petty Melchite community was disturbed by internal quarrels, which led to the interference of the emir, who took occasion to seize the Church treasures —said by the Copts to be very great—and transport them to his palace at Misr. He only allowed them to be redeemed on payment of 5,000 pieces of gold. The caliphate had now declined to a state of miserable weakness. In fact it was a mere shadow, and each emir ruled in his own province. Thus Mohammed Akchid, the emir in Egypt at this time, became an independent governor. It was useless to appeal against him to the caliph as the Copts of an earlier period had appealed to the caliph of their day. Therefore the independence of Egypt only meant more misery for the Egyptians, and that without hope of redress.

Theophanius, a Coptic patriarch who began his rule in the year 954, added to the troubles of the times by developing madness. He was taken by water to Misr for medical treatment; but one night during the voyage his delirious screams so alarmed his fellow-passengers, that one of the bishops descended to the hold and killed him—by suffocation or, as some said, by poison.

On the death of Akchid, who seems to have been a strong ruler, Mazzin of the Fatimite family—the rivals of the feeble remnant of the Abbasidæ line—succeeded in taking Egypt. Thus there was established the Fatimite caliphate in Egypt. They settled their headquarters at Cairo in the year 970. This dynasty lasted for two centuries. At first promising reform under a strenuous government, it rapidly degenerated, most of the sovereigns being absorbed in their own pleasures and displaying no great ideas and no ambitions.[1] But for the Christians much of this period afforded a breathing space between

[1] See S. Lane Poole, *Hist. of Egypt*, p. 116.

their long harassing persecutions. Just as in the old Roman times the strong and good emperors persecuted the Church, and the weak and bad emperors let it alone, so under the Mohammedan rule, while the fierce fanatics of Islam bore hardly on the "infidels," the negligent, sensual Fatimites treated them with easy toleranace.

The best of the Fatimite caliphs was El-Aziz (A.D. 975–996). He had a Christian wife, one of whose two brothers was appointed by the caliph as Melchite patriarch of Alexandria, and the other as Melchite patriarch of Jerusalem. The Christians were never so well treated under Mohammedan rule in Egypt as during this reign.[1] Although the caliph had married a Melchite, this sect was not selected for exclusive favour. The Coptic patriarch Ephraim was highly honoured at court, and he obtained leave to rebuild the ruined church of St. Mercurius. The caliph encouraged Severus, the bishop of Ushmuneyu, to discuss questions of theology with Mussulman scholars in his presence. Severus is chiefly known to us by his history, on which Renaudot based much of his narrative. Like all the literature of the time, it is credulous and tedious. Severus was a voluminous writer, composing an exposition of the faith, a treatise against Eutychius, an explanation of the mystery of the Incarnation, a commentary on the Gospels, and other works.

The liberal-minded Caliph El-Aziz even refused to punish a Mohammedan who had turned Christian—a capital offence according to the law of Islam. On the other hand, he appointed Christian Copts to high offices under his government. This course of action excited the jealousy of the Mohammedans, who obtained the removal of some of these officials. But in course of time the caliph restored them to their posts. Meanwhile El-Aziz was living in luxury and splendour; so that for this brief interval the members of the much persecuted Coptic

[1] See S. Lane Poole, *Hist. of Egypt*, p. 119.

Church were able to enjoy the good things of the world, and to look back on the dark days of their fathers as a horror of the past.

Too often when the sunshine of worldly prosperity has shone on the Church, this has been almost fatal to her spiritual life and character. This appears to have been the case under the Fatimite complacent rule. Thus the patriarch Philotheus is charged with the sin of simony, of which we hear so much in the annals of the Church in Egypt, but without the excuse of his predecessors in the old hard times; for he is said to have lived in luxury, and to have devoted himself to the pleasures of the table and the bath like any effete Oriental, ignoring the duties of his office and neglecting his flock.

This time of unusual good fortune for the Church in material affairs was followed by the very reverse, a more terrible persecution than any from which it had hitherto suffered under the yoke of Islam—the violent outbreak of the mad Caliph Hakim, to which attention was directed in an earlier part of this volume.[1] Egypt came in for her full share of suffering. Unhappily the Church was in a deplorable condition at the time, owing to quarrels among the clergy. One of these quarrels brought about the interference of the government, and so precipitated the persecution. John, a priest of Abunefer, a village near the monastery of St. Macarius, who had already paid for his ambition when he was seeking a bishopric, by being thrown into a pit by an angry prelate, had extracted a promise from the patriarch Zacharias that he should receive appointment to another bishopric. Furious at the non-fulfilment of this promise, he appealed to El-Hakim. The caliph was only too glad to have an excuse for attacking the head of the Church in Egypt. He had Zacharias arrested, and,—as the story which the Arab historian Makrizi accepted, runs,—thrown into a den of lions, who were miraculously restrained from

[1] P. 244.

hurting him.[1] In the later years of Hakim, when his fanaticism of self-deification was ripe, his persecution of the Copts was very severe. All Christian services were silenced, except in the remoter monasteries; there was a wholesale destruction of churches; Christians were ordered to wear heavy crosses and were subjected to various humiliations. A little while before he was assassinated, Hakim changed his policy towards the Christians, and ordered the rebuilding of their churches, and the removal of the worst of their restrictions. This is attributed to the favourable impression he had received when visiting Zacharias in prison, and observing the deference that was shown to the little old man in shabby clothes.

Zacharias died about the year 1012. He was succeeded by Chenouda, a monk of St. Macarius, whose simony in the sale of bishoprics was worse than that of any of his predecessors. The patriarch acted on the theory that on the death of a bishop his personal property passed over to the Church. Since Hakim's decree of toleration and restitution the Copts had enjoyed rest from persecution by the government; but now they were pillaged by their own patriarch, who practised both extortion and bribery, disgracing the free and peaceful times with corrupt Church government. Some mitigation of the evil was accomplished by a nobleman named Bekr. This generous reformer worked for the relief of the bishops. To that end he promised to pay to Alexandria the customary dues of the clergy[2]—which were made up out of the bishops' fines on appointment—if the bishops in turn would undertake to give up their exactions. The bishops demurred, and Chenouda after signing tore up the document on which the terms of this offer were set forth. A scene of confusion followed. In the end Chenouda ordered Bekr to be arrested and publicly beaten.

This disgraceful patriarch dying in the year 1047 was

[1] Neale magnanimously believes the story, although the miracle was for the benefit of a heretic, *Patriarchate of Alexandria*, vol. ii. p. 204.

[2] See p. 597.

succeeded by a reforming patriarch, Christobulus, who built new churches, conducted ordinations of many bishops, laid down and exacted rules of discipline,—mostly concerning the rubric,—and travelled to and fro settling the affairs of the Church. He much reduced the sale of offices, but could not abolish the scandalous practice. A fresh outbreak of persecution took place in the time of Christobulus, and orders went forth for the destruction of churches and the seizure of their treasures. But these orders were only partially executed. The Fatimite caliphs were now very weak, and the government fell more and more into the hands of their viziers. The situation was an Oriental counterpart of that of France under the Merovingian kings, when the affairs of the State were administered by the mayors of the palace. There was a quarrel between the Turks and the negro slaves, during which the rioters behaved as genuine barbarians, ravaging the country, scattering and destroying books and works of art. Many of these treasures from palaces and monasteries fell into the hands of the Berbers, who tore off the bindings of books to make slippers out of them. In desperation the caliph sent for the victorious General Bedr-el-Jamal and made him dictator in order to restore order. This one capable man of his time, though of course a Mussulman, even settled a quarrel in the Church.

CHAPTER IV

THE TURKISH PERIOD AND MODERN EGYPT

(*a*) Abu Salih, *Churches of Egypt* (13th century); Makrizi, *History of the Copts* (14th century); Shamse-en-din, *Historie d'Égypte* (16th century); *Mémoires* de M. de Maillet (17th century); Renaudot, *Historia Patriarcharum Alexandrinorum* (18th century).

(*b*) Lane, *Modern Egyptians*, 5th edit., 1871; De la Jonquière, *Hist. de l'Empire Ottoman*, 2nd edit., 1877; Butler, *Coptic Churches of Egypt*, 1884; Sir W. Muir, *The Mameluke or Slave Dynasty of Egypt*, 1896; Butcher, *History of the Church in Egypt*, 1897; Kyriakos, *Geschichte*, vol. iii., Ger. trans., 1898; Neale, *Patriarchate of Alexandria*; Lane Poole, *Egypt in the Middle Ages*, 1901; Fortesque, *The Orthodox Eastern Church*, 1907.

THE rise of the Turkish power brought trouble to the Copts in common with Eastern Christians of other races. At first the Turks appeared as mercenaries of the Arabs, serving under Arabian caliphs. But gradually their genius for war carried them to the front, till at length Turkish sultans usurped the authority of the caliphate. As early as the eleventh century a band of rebel Turks robbed the monasteries of the Thebaïd and murdered many of the monks. The power of the Fatimite dynasty was now nearly extinct, and the Egyptian governors were appointed by the soldiers without any reference to the caliph. When the Seleucid Turks were supreme over the East, the ill-treatment of the pilgrims at Jerusalem led to the interference of Western Europe, and so provoked the Crusades. The result, while in many respects disappointing, brought some relief to the Greek and Syrian Christians. The

progress of the Turks was arrested; the doom of Constantinople was postponed; Jerusalem was ruled by a Christian king for nearly a century, and Syria by Christian princes more or less for two hundred years. But all this brought no advantage to the Copts. In regard to the pilgrimages they were even worse off than before. Hitherto, while they had to take their chance of rough treatment equally with other Christians, the Copts had also free access to the holy sites, since Islam was scornfully indifferent to the rivalry of the Christian sects. But when Jerusalem was in the hands of the Latins, although the masters of the city were graciously willing to admit a comparative orthodoxy in the creed of the Greek Church, in common with that Church they treated the Monophysite Copts as heretics, and forbade them access to the Holy City. Thus "Jerusalem delivered" was barred against the national Church of Egypt by the Christian powers of Europe. The Copts had to wait for the recovery of Palestine by the Saracens before they could renew their pilgrimages to the tomb of Christ.

The Coptic patriarch at the time of the first Crusade was Chail IV., who had signed a document promising to abolish simony and renounce certain irksome claims of his predecessors, as a condition of his appointment when a monk in a convent near Sinjara. No sooner was he in power than he repudiated his pledge, threatening excommunication on any one who should bring it up against him. He even procured a synod's sentence of excommunication against Chenouda, the bishop of Misr, who had taken the lead in the simony question. It cannot but strike us as deplorable that, when the Crusades were beginning in a passion of religious enthusiasm, and when the Christians of the West were opening up long-closed communications with the East, the Coptic Church in Egypt should be represented by so unworthy a patriarch as this Chail.

The policy of the Crusaders revived for a time the flickering flame of the Melchite patriarchate, which was then held by Cyril, a prelate who was celebrated both as a

physician and as an author. This ecclesiastic hoped great things from the victories of the Crusaders; but he was grievously disappointed. Unlike the neighbouring province of Syria, Egypt was never wrested from the Saracen power. The Fatimite caliphs were no friends to the Turkish rule, and when they heard of the approach of the first Crusade they tried to make terms with the invaders from the West. But the situation was complicated by the fact that in a period of temporary weakness among the Turks, after the reign of the three strong sultans who had established the Seleucid dynasty, the Fatimites had recovered Jerusalem. When they perceived that the Crusaders were enemies of all Islam, and not only foes of the Turks, they were unable to proceed with their negotiations. They, too, were put on the defensive, and the fall of Jerusalem was a great blow to them, while it brought no relief to their Christian subjects in Egypt. At the same time Cyril was alarmed for his ecclesiastical prestige, on learning that Baldwin had obtained a papal bull granting all new conquests from the infidels to the patriarchate of Jerusalem—now a schismatic Latin patriarchate. Since Egypt was never conquered by the Crusaders, however, this act of Roman usurpation did not really affect him. Meanwhile, although there were invasions of Egypt by the Crusaders, since they were not able to conquer the country, the native Christians gained nothing by them.

The feeble Fatimite dynasty, which had recovered its power temporarily at the end of the tenth century, declined in the second half of the next century. Aded, the last caliph of this line, saw his dominions ravaged, both by the Turks and by the Kurds under Shawer, who burnt Babylon — with what consequences to the Christians we do not know (A.D. 1168), and overrun more than once by Amaric, the Christian King of Jerusalem. On the death of Aded in the year 1171, the famous Saladin succeeded to the government of Egypt, with the title of sultan, which he held under the caliph of Bagdad, and no Fatimite caliph was appointed. But

a shadowy caliphate of the Abbasidæ line was now restored for the sake of appearances.

About this time the Coptic Church was disturbed by a controversy concerning the confessional, a glance at which throws some light on its customs and life, and so affords a relief from the dreary succession of quarrels concerning episcopal appointments and fines and exactions that occupies too much of the history. There had grown up a strange custom of confessing to a censer. The censer that used to be swung in connection with the pronunciation of absolution had been taken by itself and placed in the corner of a room, for the penitent to make his confession before it in private without the aid of any priest. There are two ways of regarding this curious practice. It may be looked upon as a protest against the confessional, an effort to get free of the priestly interference with the liberty of the laity of which that institution is the most powerful instrument. Here was an expedient by means of which the penitent could dispense with the priest. Considered in this way the irregularity was indicative of a revolt against sacerdotalism, an anticipation of the great Protestant idea that Luther expounds in his tractate on *Christian Liberty*—"the priesthood of all Christians." But, in view of the stagnation and superstition of the times in the Eastern Churches, we cannot press this point. The presence of the censer is too suspiciously indicative of a magical element in religion, as though this material object with its ascending smoke were credited with performing the high office of priestly intercession. One grave reason offered for the practice was the notoriously bad character of many of the priests. Meanwhile there was this basis for the superstition of the censer, that in the regular services the incense burnt at the commencement of the liturgy was supposed to be in some mysterious way connected with the remission of sins of the congregation through their private confession. The practice was opposed by Mark the son of Kunbar, a priest who preached earnestly against it. His opponents got him excommunicated on a charge of having dismissed

his wife and induced some one else to marry her. Still he preached, however, insisting on the necessity of confessing to a priest in order to obtain absolution. The people flocked to him in crowds, both to hear his sermons and to confess to him. The matter became so serious that a synod, said to have consisted of sixty bishops, met and pronounced against him. He was deposed, and then he appealed to the Moslem power, with a memorial stating that he had preached nothing contrary to canonical authority or the teaching of the Fathers, and demanding a fair trial according to the rules of the Church. Such a reference to the government is most significant, since it shows that in spite of so much that was oppressive, the Christians recognised in it the centre of law and order. The sequel confirms the reasonableness of this view. The civil authorities commanded the patriarch to institute a trial; but he refused, for the authorities of the Church as represented by the episcopate were on his side. Michael of Damietta took the lead in supporting the novel custom, writing a short treatise on it which is still in existence. The next stage was an appeal to Michael I., the Jacobite patriarch of Antioch, who wavered in his treatment of the question. At first he inclined to the view of the bishops, and was induced to regard Mark as a heretic; but on learning more about the case he swung round to the opposite view, and supported the practice of confession to the priest. Both this patriarch and the learned writer Bar Salibi wrote on the necessity of that practice. Mark, however, found little comfort in his own Church, since the bishops were still opposed to him. He joined the Greek Church, returned to the Coptic, went over to the Greek communion again, and yet again sought to be readmitted to his own old Church. It is not surprising that the Coptic patriarch refused to have any more to do with him.

It is curious to find Neale championing Mark as "the English Chillingworth." The outstanding feature of the whole story is the fact that the bishops were supporting the novel practice, which, however materialistic

and superstitious we may hold it to be, was nevertheless partially Protestant in its opposition to sacerdotalism, while on this occasion the protestor stood for the rights and powers of the priests. Such a situation is unique in history. It is tantalising to know too little of the motives of the chief actors in it for adequate judgment of its true inwardness. When bishops champion the rights of the laity against the priestly claims of presbyters, the inference is that since some of them are men of culture and reading, while the lower clergy are steeped in ignorance, the reason is disciplinary rather than doctrinal. The ignorant priests were not fit to be trusted with the machinery of the confessional. Some of them were men of no character. Discerning bishops might well discourage confession to such men, because they saw that it was safer for simple souls to confess to the smoking censer, which, if it could not give ghostly advice, was at least free from any corrupting influence.

In the earlier part of his reign Saladin removed the Christians from public offices and laid upon them many vexatious restrictions, such as the prohibition of bell-ringing, crosses on churches, procession on Palm Sundays, chanting of services in a loud voice. He directed the churches to be painted black. Nevertheless, he was a large-minded, strong ruler, who secured good order in his dominions. If the Christians were shut out of office they were also spared the fines that his mean predecessors had too often attached to public functions, so that it really seemed that the posts were allotted for the sake of the backshish. In his later days Saladin readmitted Christians to the government service. It is not surprising that under these circumstances there were some Christians who apostasised to Mohammedanism, favour drawing them where persecution had failed to drive. But when a certain monk who had joined Islam returned to his monastery, a soldier was sent with orders to put him to death unless he came back to the religion of the Prophet. This was quite in accordance with Mussulman law. A Christian might

remain a Christian, but when once he had become a Mohammedan he came under the stern rule of Islam, which exacts the death penalty on all who forsake the creed of the Prophet. The miserable waverer not only yielded to the threat of death, but he even lodged with the government information of treasure which he said the monastery that had given him an asylum contained. Very little was found there, and that little was returned when the whole story was known.

The later Crusades had hardly any more effect on the Church in Egypt than had been the case with the earlier expeditions from Europe for the recovery of the Holy Land. The siege of Damietta (A.D. 1218) and the ill-fated expedition of St. Louis (A.D. 1248–1250) were wholly affairs of the Latin Church with which the Copts had no concern. Had these wars been successful in the end, they would have been free from the yoke of Islam only to face the demand of submission to Rome. Meanwhile the Saracen rule of Egypt was more just and enlightened than any form of government that the Copts had ever known before. There was therefore little temptation for them to give much material aid to the Crusaders. Unhappily their own internal history at this time does not furnish us with an edifying record. Quarrels on the election of patriarchs, and charges of simony against patriarchs when in power, are the chief items that break the monotony of the narrative. The Sultan Kamel refused an offer of heavy bribes to favour the election of a candidate for the patriarchate. He was so pleased with a visit he paid to the monastery of St. Macarius that he richly endowed it and granted its monks several privileges. On the other hand, the patriarch Cyril, who was appointed during his reign and very affably received by the sultan, turned out to be a cause of great trouble in the Church. He was guilty of outrageous simony—the typical offence of the Eygptian patriarchs of which we hear again and again in successive ages. There had been a gap in the patriarchate which had resulted in many vacancies in the

bishoprics. Cyril ordained forty bishops, and accumulated a very considerable sum of money by means of the large fees he exacted from them. At length he was arrested on charges of malversation of funds and sent to Cairo. The bishops now proposed terms to him. He should give up the practice of simony, and have his authority limited in several directions; but he was liberated by favour of the sultan without agreeing to these terms. Subsequently, since fresh complaints were brought forward, fourteen bishops of Lower Egypt met at Cairo and induced him to consent to a number of reforms, among which was the requirement that the consecration of bishops and priests should be performed free of charge. But the quarrel went on. Cyril was repeatedly accused to the sultan and repeatedly fined. Yet so great was the influence of his office that he was able to raise all the funds requisite to satisfy the government. He held the control of the mighty engine of ordination. If he refused to ordain bishops the episcopate would die out, and with it the priesthood, and with that the Church itself. The sacerdotal system derived all its authority primarily from the patriarch. When religion depends on the sacraments, the sacraments on the priests, the priests on the bishops, and the bishops on the patriarch—without whose concurrence their ordination is uncanonical, this supreme prelate holds the key of the situation. He can exact his own terms before consenting to ordain. Thus he can obtain sufficient money to bribe the civil authority when that authority, the only power above him, is invoked to interfere with his tyrannical practices. In this way Cyril was able to continue his disgraceful practices till his death relieved the Copts of the incubus of his patriarchal rule (A.D. 1243).

The subsequent story of the Coptic Church becomes less and less interesting, except at one or two points, where its monotony is broken by the emergence of a striking personality or by the occurrence of events in the outer world. The original sources for the history are here very meagre, so that we have not materials from which to come

to an adequate knowledge of the succession of events. But what is preserved is enough to show that we do not lose much for lack of fuller information. We are now approaching the age of the Mamelukes. These were at first barbarous slaves who pushed to the front and seized the power of government. Their rule began in the year 1260, and it came as an improvement on the government of the degenerate sultans and caliphs. They elevated two successive nominal caliphs of the Abbasidæ line, who were mere shadows. After the year 1382 a Circassian dynasty of Mamelukes ruled, without that pretence of respect for antiquarianism. The Mamelukes have been described as "jealous, cruel, suspicious, avaricious."[1] But they lightened taxes and executed some public works. These rulers of an alien race held themselves aloof both from the Arabs and from the Copts. They remained in power till the year 1517. It was really an oligarchical government with nominal boy sultans, carried on in the midst of plots and assassinations. Meanwhile great events were being transacted in Eastern Europe. But the establishment of the Ottoman rule and the fall of Constantinople had no appreciable effect on the fortunes of the Copts. They had been long under the yoke of Islam, and the change of masters from one dynasty to another, and even from race to race, made little difference to their subject condition. Just and merciful governors left them at peace with their guaranteed rights; vicious and iniquitous rulers preyed upon them and persecuted them. The variations of treatment depended more on the personnel of the authorities than on the name and source of the government.

Within the Church itself the movement of the times brought two successive influences from without to bear on it. These were the Uniat propaganda associated with the council of Florence and the Protestant ideas that Cyril Lucar introduced after his travels in the West.

The Coptic Church had but little active concern with

[1] Sir W. Muir, *The Mamelukes*, etc., p. 66.

the efforts of men in the East to come to terms with the Western Church. The origin and motives of these efforts were not religious or even ecclesiastical; they were purely political. John Palæologus and other emperors saw the desperate need of a European alliance if the onward march of the Turks was to be stayed and the last remnants of the Byzantine Empire preserved. What interest had that policy for the Copts, already subject to Islam and not of the Greek communion? Nevertheless the Coptic patriarch, John XI., sent John the abbot of St. Antony as a delegate to Florence. He did not arrive till after the Greeks had left. This will account for the fact that the council decreed union with the Coptic Church. But it had previously effected a nominal union with the Greek Church. And yet these two Churches mutually anathematised one another. The consequences would have been interesting if there had been any reality in the acts of union. But since, in point of fact, they were never accepted by either of the Eastern Churches, they can only be regarded as pious pronouncements in the region of idea. Metrophanes, the metropolitan of Cyzicum, whom the emperor made patriarch of Constantinople on account of his staunch support of the union of the Greeks and Latins, was denounced by the three other Greek patriarchs as a "matricide"—for killing his "mother Church." The union with the Jacobites was no more real, and the Copts still remained in separation from the Latin as well as from the Greek Churches.

The story of Cyril Lucar belongs to the Greek Church, and therefore it has been given earlier in this volume.[1] We are accustomed to think of him as the patriarch of Alexandria before he was translated to the patriarchate of Constantinople. But he was the Melchite patriarch, the representative of the alien Greek communion with its few adherents in Alexandria and its neighbourhood. Still it is a fact of significance in regard to Christianity in Egypt, that although not a member of the

[1] See pp. 309 ff.

national Church, Cyril introduced the new learning into that country. He appeared as a vigorous opponent of Rome, and many who had no notion of what Protestantism was saying and doing in the West were ready to welcome a man who shared the general aversion to union with the papacy that was felt by the Greek Church in Egypt. There can be no doubt, however, that he was strongly imbued with Protestantism. A modern Roman Catholic historian says of him, "He was a Protestant who formed a party of Calvinists in his Church, and his opinions were afterwards condemned by four councils."[1] Cyril influenced a group of men in Alexandria of his own Church in the direction of Protestantism. But the time was peculiarly unpropitious for the spread of similar influences among the Copts, because they were still in a measure compromised by the nominal union with Rome that had been pronounced at Florence.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century the national Church in Egypt was in a feeble condition, at the very ebb of its fortunes; and the Melchite Church was even lower, being reduced to little else than a nominal patriarchate. Then came Peter VII., a good man who was anxious to improve matters. In the year 1833, Curzon visited Egypt in search of manuscripts that he hoped to find among the monasteries. He was followed by Archdeacon Tattam, who roused some interest in England by his accounts of the ignorant and depressed condition of the Coptic Christians, the first consequence of which was an issue of an Arabic version of the four Gospels by the British and Foreign Bible Society. In the year 1840 the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge produced an Arabic translation of old Egyptian commentaries. About the same time Grimshaw, an English clergyman, went to Egypt and helped to start a school that was conducted by a Mr. Lieder for the training of priests. This school met with little encouragement. Peter died in the year 1854, and was succeeded by Cyril, at first an active reformer of

[1] Fortescue, *The Orthodox Eastern Church*, p. 264.

the Coptic Church. This enlightened patriarch established schools for girls as well as for boys, rebuilt the cathedral, destroyed pictures as idols, gathered a new council to help him, and established a college at Cairo in charge of Philotheus, an able, learned man. Unfortunately the patriarch would not give the principal a free hand, and, being dissatisfied with his teaching, broke the college up.

In the year 1890 a society of young laymen was constituted for reforming the Coptic Church, and it issued pamphlets in Arabic. Then Cyril got up a rival society called "the Orthodox." A public meeting was called to meet Cyril, which so alarmed the patriarch that he put himself under the protection of the police. His next step was to call a synod, at which he gave the bishops a statement requiring them to sign it and read it in their churches. He would reform the Church; but this must be in his own way. Of course there was great dissatisfaction at such high-handed proceedings, and the Khedive Tewfic intervened. But Cyril would not listen to persuasion. A new council was elected, in which Athanasius of Sanabu, a bishop of the young reform party, was a member. Cyril excommunicated him. Such conduct was unbearable, and the reformers got Cyril banished to Nitria. Meanwhile every effort was made to induce him to withdraw the excommunication of Athanasius, but in vain. At last Athanasius and his supporters simply ignored it. Then came a reaction from the older people; Cyril was recalled, and his return was a triumph, although he had proved himself an obstinate, tyrannical prelate. Still there was progress in spite of these difficulties. The stagnation of the Coptic Church has been largely due to the ignorance of the priests. There is now some progress towards an education of candidates for the ministry, and therefore hope of better times to come. The Copts look to England for sympathy, and rejoice in the English rule of Egypt. They know that if England had not stepped in to suppress the rebellion of Arabi Pasha they would have been massacred wholesale.

CHAPTER V

ABYSSINIAN CHRISTIANITY

(*a*) Rufinus; Socrates; Sozomen; Theodoret; Nicephorus; Zonaras; Cedrenus; John of Ephesus; Arabian authorities; Alvarez (trans. by Lord Stanley of Alderley); Tellez, *Historia de Ethiopia*, 1660; Ludolphus, *History of Ethiopia*, 1684; Geddes, *Church History of Ethiopia*, 1696; Le Quien, *Oriens Christ.* ii., 1741; Bruce, *Travels*, 1768–73.

(*b*) Reynolds in Smith's *Dict. of Christian Biography*, art. "Ethiopian Church"; Wright, *Christianity in Arabia*, 1855; Hotten, *Abyssinia Described*, 1868; Portal, *My Mission to Abyssinia*, 1892; Duchesne, *Les Missions Chrétiens au sud de l'empire Romain*, 1896; Lauribar, *Douze ans en Abysinnie*, 1898.

ABYSSINIAN Christianity is a Judaistic, Monophysite form of religion which has been corrupted in the course of ages during its long severance from the influences of the rest of Christendom. It is naturally most nearly associated with the Coptic Church, because it derived its origin from Egypt, agreed with the Copts in following Dioscurus in his opposition to the decrees of Chalcedon, formerly owned allegiance to the patriarch of Alexandria, and for a long while kept in touch with the Christians of Egypt. Between Abyssinia, known as Ethiopia in early times, and Egypt was Nubia, for long an independent Christian nation. When that country was conquered by the Arabs and its Christianity simply wiped out, Abyssinia was cut off from all direct relations with Egypt. There was still the Red Sea route, the route by which the gospel reached Abyssinia in the first instance. But when Egypt was subject to the Mussulman rule the Copts had neither the heart nor the power to use it in order to keep in touch with a remote

nation in the south with which they were no longer directly connected.

Like the name "India," the word "Ethiopia" is used in the vaguest way by ancient writers. There can be no doubt that these two names sometimes overlap. The land on both sides of the Red Sea to the south was known as Ethiopia. The Queen of Sheba may have come either from Asia or from Africa. But the Ethiopia of which we know in Christian times was undoubtedly in Africa. The extent of land to which the name is given is never defined, but we may understand it as roughly corresponding to our modern Abyssinia, a country the limits of which are not determined in the present day. Abyssinia is a form of the name given by the Arabs (*Habeʿsh*, meaning "mixture," "confusion," because of the mixed character of the peoples inhabiting it); but the Abyssinians still call themselves "Ethiopians" (*Itiopyavan*) and their country "Ethiopia" (*Itiopia*). The Jewish character of some of the customs of the Abyssinians has given rise to the conjecture that these people were influenced by the Jews before they became Christian; but the fact that some of those customs, such as circumcision, distinctions of clean and unclean food, and the levirate marriage, are much more widespread, being found more or less in Arabia and in other parts of Africa, tends to destroy the grounds of this hypothesis. Dr. Reynolds suggested that the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath in Abyssinia may be traced to Judaic influences in ancient Christianity.[1] Still, the number of coincidences creates a cumulative argument in favour of the spread of early Jewish ideas. There can be no doubt that the diaspora was immensely influential for two or three centuries. Its missionary activity has been unfairly disregarded because thrown into the shade by the greater activity of the Christian evangelism that both absorbed and superseded it. The story of the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts points to the early introduction of Christianity into Africa. But the name "Candace" which is there given to

[1] Smith, *Dic. Christ. Biog.* vol. ii. p. 234[a].

the queen is not found in Ethiopia proper. It is known to have been the title of a succession of queens at Meroe on the Upper Nile (half-way between Berber and Kartoum); so that the Ethiopian eunuch would be a Nubian from the Soudan. Christianity could reach Ethiopia more easily from the coast; and that it did so in early times is implied by a remark of Origen: "We are not told that the gospel has been preached among *all* the Ethiopians."[1]

We come to the fourth century for the effective introduction of Christianity into Ethiopia. Seeing that Rufinus, who is our earliest authority, tells us that he obtained his information direct from one of the two young men whose story he gives, we may consider that we have here come upon an unusually good historical source.[2] The story is repeated with some variations by the Greek historians.[3] It is as follows: Meropius, a philosopher from Tyre, took two young relations—perhaps sons—named Frumentius and Ædesius on a voyage of exploration in the direction of "India." On the way they put into a port by the African side of the Red Sea for water. The people of these parts had recently revolted from Rome, and they murdered Meropius and the whole of the ship's crew, but spared the two young men, touched with pity for them when they discovered them apart from their companions quietly seated reading under a tree. They sent them to their king, who made Ædesius his cupbearer and Frumentius the keeper of his rolls. On the death of the king the young men were set at liberty; but at the request of the queen, who was now regent, they consented to remain and help in the administration of the government during the minority of her son. Frumentius, who was the abler and more energetic of the two, now sought out the Christians among the Roman merchants in the country, and gave them authority and advice for building churches. As yet this was only a movement among the foreign residents. But here was

[1] Origen, *Comment.* on Matt. xxiv. 9.
[2] Rufinus, *Hist. Eccl.* i. 9.
[3] Socrates, i. 19; Sozomen ii. 24; Theodoret, i. 23.

the seed of the great missionary work that was destined to make the name of Frumentius famous in Christian history. In spite of the queen's entreaties, the two brothers left the country when the young prince was old enough to undertake the responsibilities of government. They must both have been of an earnest religious character, for Ædesius became a presbyter at Tyre, where Rufinus received the story from his own lips, while Frumentius went to Alexandria in order to urge its bishop, who was no other than the great Athanasius, to appoint a bishop for undertaking missionary work in Ethiopia. Athanasius brought the matter before a synod, and there addressing Frumentius, said, "What other man shall we find such as thou art, in whom is the spirit of God, as He is in thee, who will be able to discharge these duties?" Accordingly Frumentius was ordained bishop of Auxume in Ethiopia. He was called *Abba Salama* ("Father of Peace"), a title borne by his successors down to the present day. This story is confirmed and added to by the literature of the Ethiopian Church—its annals, liturgy, and poetry.

Subsequently Constantius wrote to the King of Ethiopia urging him to replace Frumentius by Theophilus, an Arian, who was under George, the Arian bishop imposed on the Church of Alexandria; but his letter does not appear to have had any effect, and Arianism did not penetrate into the Ethiopian Church. After this we know little of the history of that Church for a long time. But a number of saints are celebrated in Ethiopian poetry, among whom is Aragawi, who is confused with the archangel Michael, the patron of the Church and the kingdom, to whom the twelfth day in every month is consecrated.

There is another story of the conversion of Ethiopia, told by Nicephorus, corresponding to which is the account in John of Ephesus. According to this story, the Emperor of Ethiopia vowed that if he conquered the Homerites of the Red Sea coast he would embrace Christianity, and that having obtained the victory he appealed to Justinian for help in carrying out his vow, when the Roman emperor

responded by sending him bishops. The Monophysite character of Ethiopian Christianity is enough to contradict this story, and there are other improbabilities connected with it. We must always associate Abyssinian Christianity with the Coptic, not with the Byzantine type. About this time there was a persecution of Christians in South Arabia under Dunaan, a Jewish usurper, and among the martyrs was Aretas, who had come from Auzume as governor of the province. He and his wife and a number of other Christians were cruelly martyred in a pit of fire.

Monasticism was introduced into Ethiopia in the fifth century, and it has remained as one of the institutions of Abyssinian Christianity down to the present day. There is a large number of monks and nuns in the country, as well as married priests after the manner of the Oriental Churches generally. The Ethiopic canon of Scriptures is of curious interest. It contains several books not included in the canons of the Eastern and Western Catholic Churches. The Old Testament has all the Septuagint books except Maccabees, together with the Books of Enoch, Jubilees, iv. Ezra, and other apocryphal writings, and the New Testament books are reckoned at thirty-five—eight books of the Canon Law (called *Sinodos*) being added to the usual twenty-seven.

After the sixth century Abyssinia was almost entirely lost to view for nearly a thousand years—a section of Christendom cut off from the main body of the Church by the intruding Mohammedan power. For a long time, however, it contrived to get its metropolitan from Egypt, and so acknowledged its ecclesiastical relationship to the Coptic patriarchate of Alexandria. The canon required twelve bishops for the consecration of a metropolitan; but there were only seven in Abyssinia. In the twelfth century the king requested that more might be appointed, and the Mohammedan government approved of the request; but the patriarch Gabriel refused it—an impolitic action which resulted in Abyssinia taking things into its own

hands and electing its own metropolitan. After that, although the patriarchate of Alexandria might be nominally allowed to extend to Abyssinia, the Abyssinians really had an independent Church.

In the meantime we witness the sad spectacle of the utter vanishing of Christianity from Nubia, where once it had been strong and flourishing. For many years this region of the Soudan had existed as a Christian kingdom, which refused to admit the Arab suzerainty. Ahmed, the son of Solaim, who went to Nubia as an ambassador from the Moslem ruler, tells how he "passed through nearly thirty towns with fine houses, monasteries, numberless palm groves, vineyards, gardens and wide-spreading fields, besides herds of camels of great beauty and breeding"[1] Kartoum was then adorned with magnificent buildings and great houses. Its churches were enriched with gold, and the whole city was beautified with gardens.[2] The King of Nubia used to invite the bishops to join his wise men in discussing with him the affairs of the kingdom; in fact, he had a sort of House of Lords, consisting of peers temporal and spiritual. Ahmed himself was courteously received by King George, who, he says, took the Moslems with him in a procession on a festival day. But in course of time this happy relationship, which could only exist so long as the Egyptian government was not strong enough to break it up, came to an end. The King of Nubia had always declined to admit the suzerainty of the sultan. He persistently refused the tribute of slaves which the Mohammedan power demanded from him. When that power was sufficiently established, it punished the independence of Nubia by completely overrunning and conquering the country and effectually stamping out Christianity. The result is seen to-day in the barbarous Mohammedanism of the tribes of the Soudan, whose ancestors had constituted a highly civilised Christian kingdom.

[1] Quatremere in Butcher, *Hist. of Church in Egypt*, vol. ii. p. 3.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 4.

The destruction of the Christian kingdom of Nubia was the chief cause of the isolation of Abyssinia for many centuries. That country only comes to light again in the sixteenth century, owing to the enterprising spirit of the Portuguese. It would have been infinitely better for the unhappy land if it had been left to its isolation and obscurity. The Portuguese brought in their train bigoted emissaries of the Church of Rome, who, in accordance with the custom of the times, resorted to violence and cruelty in attempting to force a nation that they regarded as heretical into the papal mould. But the first interchange of communications was civil and friendly. Prince Henry of Portugal, having heard semi-fabulous tales of Prester John in a mysterious "India," sent two ambassadors, Pedro de Corvilhãa and Alphonso de Payva, to the Christian sovereign of Abyssinia. Alphonso died; but Pedro was adopted by the Abyssinian nation, highly honoured by the king, and married into a high Abyssinian family. Still he kept up communications with Portugal. Early in the sixteenth century the Queen Helena, who was then regent for her son, a child of eleven years, sent Matthew, an Armenian merchant of ability and trustworthiness, on an embassy to the King of Portugal, asking him to enter into an alliance with her in order to resist the Turks, and proposing an intermarriage between the two royal families. Matthew went first to Goa in India and thence round by the Cape to Portugal, encountering many difficulties and discouragements on his journey. There he gained his end so far as to secure a Portuguese embassy to return with him to Abyssinia. The chaplain of this embassy was Alvarez, who has left us a graphic account of his own experiences and observations concerning the country and people to which he was sent. His narrative is held by some critics not to be entirely reliable; but, after making allowance for inaccuracies, we still have here a mass of information about Abyssinia, including what is especially valuable for our present purposes, light on the practices of the Church. Thus at length the curtain is raised, and again

after centuries of obscurity we are able to contemplate Abyssinian Christianity.[1]

Alvarez bears witness to the lingering of Jewish customs among the Abyssinians. Thus he says that the monks rest for eight days after Easter—a custom which we may regard as parallel to the passover holiday; they partially observe the Saturday Sabbath, and they continued to practise circumcision; but the latter custom, we have seen, was too widespread to be attributed to the influence of Judaism. The travellers saw a great number of monasteries and churches. Like the temple of Osiris at Abu-Simbel, some of the churches are entirely hewn out of the rock. One of these is as large as a cathedral, with well-wrought nave and aisles, vaulted-shaped roof, and square columns—all cut out of the solid rock. The monastery of Bisa has six other monasteries, each with a David at its head under the presiding Abba, and is very rich. It is said to number 3,000 monks, but Alvarez only saw 300. The monasteries are generally set on rocks and hilltops surrounded by woods. The churches all appear to be vaulted; but they have straw roofs. There is only one altar in each church, in the chancel. Bells, or rather long, thin stone clappers, are in use. The services are conducted with chanting to no particular tune. There are prayers and psalms and one lesson, all shouted rather than intoned or merely read. The mass begins with a shout of Hallelujah, and concludes with a procession of four or five crosses, to an accompaniment of drums, cymbals, and incense, carried round the church quite thirty times. While the mass is proceeding, lighted candles are held up by those round the officiating priest. The shouting and singing are taken up by the people outside the church as well as by the congregation within. The communion is received by the laity as well as by the clergy in both kinds, the communicants after receiv-

[1] See *Narrative of Portuguese Embassy to Abyssinia during the Years 1520–1527*, by Father Francisco Alvarez (trans. by Lord Stanley of Alderley, Hakluyt Society).

ing the cup washing out their mouths with holy water and drinking it. Bread is blessed and distributed at all the monasteries and churches on the Saturday Sabbaths, on Sundays, and on feast days. The monks carry crosses before them when they walk abroad, and laymen have crosses on their backs. Alvarez says of the monks, "being thin and dry like wood, they appear to be men of a holy life. . . . The clothes which they wear are old yellow cotton stuffs, and they go barefooted."[1] The practice of polygamy, though not frequent, and though condemned by the Church to the extent of exclusion from the communion, was not otherwise prohibited. At one place, Barua, Alvarez found men with two and even with three wives. Here were two churches, that of St. Michael for men, and that of St. Peter and St. Paul for women. The same priests ministered to both churches. As in the East generally, the priests were not celibate, but if a priest lost his wife he might not marry a second time. The priesthood was mainly recruited from the families of the priests, who thus became virtually a caste. There were no schools or masters to prepare the candidates for orders, and the clergy taught the little that they knew themselves to their sons.[2]

At this time the Abyssinians were engaged in wars with the Turks, who invaded their country, slaughtering many people, and destroying churches and monasteries. Ultimately the Portuguese came to the assistance of their fellow-Christians; but it was long before the Turkish intrusion was effectually repelled. Then troubles broke out between the two Churches that were now represented in the country. King David prevailed on the catholicos of Abyssinia, Abuna Mark, who had become too old and infirm to administer the affairs of the Church, to consecrate a Portuguese, João Bermudez, in his place. In this way the Roman Catholicism, to which the king was favourable, was represented in the head of Abyssinian Christianity. But this did not result in the surrender of the national Church

[1] *Ibid.* p. 16. [2] *Ibid.* p. 57.

to the papacy. The pope made an attempt to secure that result through the Coptic patriarch of Alexandria. But this too failed. In the year 1600, an able Jesuit, Pedro Piaz, came as a Roman missionary to Abyssinia. A few years later the King Socinios embraced the Catholic faith of the Two Natures after a public disputation on the subject in his presence. This was the first step towards submission to Rome. On the other hand, the Abuna Simon published a sentence of excommunication against all who affirmed that there were two natures in our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus the old Monophysite quarrel that had slumbered for centuries was rekindled in Abyssinia with regard to the ecclesiastical question of the supremacy of the pope. This led to civil war, in which the Abuna was killed—it is said scréaming curses against his sovereign. The king issued a manifesto denouncing both the heretical tenets and the corrupt morals of his national Church. When the news of his submission to Rome reached Lisbon, Alphonso Menez was there consecrated patriarch of Ethiopia. He was welcomed by Socinios in February 1626. The king then issued a proclamation commanding submission to the Roman Catholic faith on pain of death. Churches were reconsecrated, clergy re-ordained, converts re-baptised, and the abolition of circumcision and polygamy commanded. Again there was rebellion, followed by disorder and bloodshed. But when resigning his throne to his son, Socinios issued a proclamation tolerating both the ancient and the new faiths.[1]

The most complete English account of the history of Abyssinia is to be found in Bruce's five fine quarto volumes on his travels in search of the sources of the Nile. From his own observation he is able to give us a detailed description of the country in the eighteenth century. "There is no country in the world," he says, "where there are so many churches as Abyssinia";[2] and he adds that every great man who dies thinks to atone for his misdeeds by building a church.

[1] See Bruce, *Travels*, vol. ii. pp. 265 ff.

[2] *Ibid.* vol. iii. p. 313.

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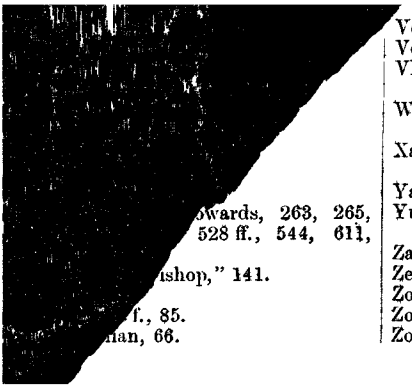

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